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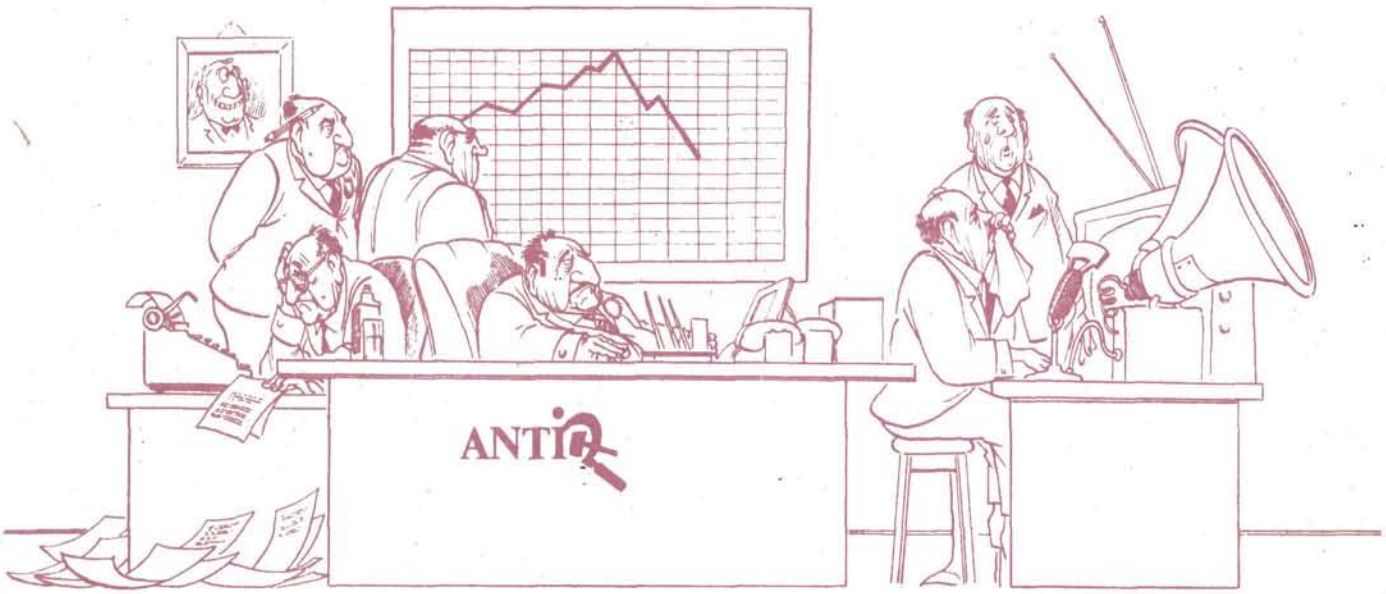

FRANK GETLEIN THE DEUTSCHE TREATMENT
PETER STEINFELS THE FOUR JIMMY CARTERS
ROBERT A. PUGSLEY BRINGING BACK DEATH
LOIS SPEAR BICENTENNIAL ON DEATH ROW
COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR. PRESENT AT THE CREATION

BARRY WALLENSTEIN POETRY IN J
JOHN FANDEL READING IN DOMUS A

MARGARET O'BRIEN STEINFELS THE END OF THE FAMILY?
REVIEWS: JOHN DRUSKA, GERARD S. SLOYAN, CHILTON WILLIAMSON, JR., NICHOLAS R. CLIFFORD

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NEWS & VIEWS

Our Nation's Father

George Washington, we know thanks to Marvin Kitman, took very good care of his expense account. We learn from the newly published papers of Louis Philippe, Duke of Orléans and later King of France (1830-1848), that he took less good care of his 400 slaves.

Louis Philippe's journals speak of a visit to Mount Vernon in 1797 and dinner with *Le Général. Le Général* lived grandly, of course, but his slaves? They were quartered, Louis Philippe reveals, in "decrepit wooden shacks teeming with Negro children covered with rags that not even our beggars would wear."

Le Général's cook had recently run off to Philadelphia, and Louis Philippe's manservant, Beaudoin, spoke with the 6-year-old daughter left behind. Was she upset at not being able to see her father again? "Oh, sir, I am very glad," she replied, "because he is free now."

A Louis Philippe descendant allowed publication of the journals as a gesture to the U.S. on its 200th birthday. Washington's descendants, had he had any, would undoubtedly say, "Thanks for nothing." Others of us are grateful for a healthy Bicentennial whiff of historical reality.

Tributes to Sisyphus

To return briefly to Wes Barthelmes, the Sisyphus of *Commonweal's* Washington Report column, who died a few weeks ago. . . .

It will be recalled from the obituary notices that Sisyphus worked a number of years on Capitol Hill as an aide to several distinguished legislators, including Senators Church and Biden and Representative Bolling. Inevitably, therefore, there were the traditional tributes from the floors of the House and Senate to the deceased aide. Except, in Barthelmes' case, the tributes transcended the perfunctory, ran over parts of four days, and consumed long columns of the *Congressional Record* for June 24, 25, 28, 29.

One of the tributes was from Senator Edward Kenedy, for whose brother, Robert, Barthelmes worked as press secretary before moving on and being succeeded by Frank Mankiewicz. Some words of Senator Kennedy merit recording here for the summary they provide to Wes Barthelmes as person and as exemplar:

". . . I would like to say a few words about why his death is such an enormous loss to Capitol Hill and to the nation.

"Wes represented to all of us the very best in politics and in government. He was filled with talent and energy and good humor and commitment to the notion that every government action makes a difference in people's lives. He was loyal to those he served and to principles of compassion and decency in government. And he gave his total energy to both.

"I am saddened to think that those young people who may have become discouraged with politics as a career as a result of Watergate did not have the opportunity to know Wes. For him, politics was the finest way to use your own talents to the fullest, to test your own endurance and energy to its limits, and most importantly to use that talent and energy to help the most vulnerable members of our society, those disadvantaged by illness or handicaps, by age or by poverty."

Margulies, Rothco

NEWS ITEM: *"Postal System Considering New Rate Structure for First Class Mail"*

Boomerang Effects

One of the philosophical underpinnings of the arms export business is that the weapons are meant not to be used, but to threaten and deter. It may be reverse logic, but the deadlier the weapons, supposedly the greater the influence.

A new folly of this reasoning is pointed up by Edward Schumacher in a *Washington Post* piece. The arms trade, he notes, has graduated to such sophisticated equipment that the deterrence factor is being wiped out and the U.S. is being hamstrung militarily in the bargain.

"The U.S. may have bigger and better conventional weapons," Schumacher writes, but the older weapons in the hands of the Third World nations are sufficiently deadly to be effective. Battleships become more sophisticated, but they still sink when hit by a torpedo."

In fact, concludes Schumacher, the deterrent value of U.S.-made weapons is shifting to favor Third World purchasers against the U.S.

"The restraint on the United States," he argues, is not felt so much at the level of all-out war, where the full might of the American military would presumably be unleashed, but at lower levels of military action. These range from sending in the Marines to free American citizens to sailing in warships to influence a Third World crisis.

"The exported weapons are raising the threshold at which the United States, and quite likely the Soviets, are willing to risk a military confrontation."

Problem Solver

Making the rounds is the ultimate chain letter:

Dear Friend:

Now you can have your own kind of priest. Now you can know the relief and happiness of having in your parish a priest who thinks about the church just like you.

Simply send a copy of this letter to six other parishes that are tired of their priest. Then, bundle up your priest and send him to the parish at the top of the list that follows.

In one week you will receive 16,436 priests—and one of them should be a dandy. Have faith in this letter. Do not break the chain. One man broke the chain and got his old priest back.

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Odds and Ends

—*Quote of the Week:* Eugene McCarthy on Jimmy Carter's top advisers: "Most of them you wouldn't want to put in charge of snake control in Ireland." . . . Gene McCarthy, on the other hand, should be afflicted with such incompetents.

JOHN DEEDY

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CORRESPONDENCE

Clean Sweep

Providence, R.I.

To the Editors: Brian Wicker, still tingling from his brief brush with Charismatic Renewal [June 18], facilely sweeps aside the very real concerns about the movement (regressive fundamentalism, theological physicalism, etc.) and in their stead prefers to be bowled over by the "charity and integrity of purpose among that large crowd."

If these are Mr. Wicker's criteria for determining the height and breadth of an assemblage, may I respectfully suggest that his next stop be the National Fuller Brush Convention?

(REV.) BARRY R.L. CONNERTON

Pro-Life Politics

Ridge, Md.

To the Editors: In his "Politics and Abortion" [July 2], Gerard A. Brandmeyer maintains that Ellen McCormack, champion of a right-to-life amendment, hurt her cause by becoming a candidate.

When the election campaign is over, I predict that it will be evident that McCormack will have exceeded her realistic objective, that is, to get the issue before the public (despite much of the media's determined silence), and to command some political leverage, by gaining a three-percent "swing vote," which she stated as her expectation, speaking outside the Capitol at this year's January 20 "March for Life." So it seems to be happening.

First, a large majority of the candidates, be it from conviction or convenience, have announced they personally are opposed to abortion, even though only Reagan and Wallace indicated that they would favor a right-to-life amendment.

Second, though predictably McCormack got only 200,000 votes in the primaries, there seems reason to be-

(Continued on page 543)

NEWS & VIEWS: 514 **CORRESPONDENCE:** 515
EDITORIAL: 515
WASHINGTON REPORT: *The Deutsche Treatment: Frank Getlein* 516
BRINGING BACK DEATH: *Robert A. Pugsley* 518
THE FOUR JIMMY CARTERS: *Peter Steinfels* 520
THE ITALIAN ELECTIONS: *Robert E. Proctor* 521
THE 'RELIGIONS' OF ITALY: *Lawrence S. Cunningham* 524
BICENTENNIAL ON DEATH ROW: *Sister Lois Spear, O.P.* 527
VERSE: *Roy Scheele* 526
THE SCREEN: *Colin L. Westerbeck, Jr.* 528
POETRY IN PERFORMANCE: *Barry Wallenstein* 530
READING IN DOMUS ANGELORUM: *John Fandel* 531
THE END OF THE FAMILY?: *Margaret O'Brien Steinfels* 533
BOOKS: *John Druska, Gerard S. Sloyan, Nicholas R. Clifford, Chilton Williamson, Jr.* 536
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BREATHING SPELL IN ITALY

Inside the fat man that is the Christian Democratic party in Italy, there are at least two other men clamoring to get out—a liberal-radical on one hand and a conservative-reactionary on the other. The two really have no business being in the same party, of course; their union makes as much sense as would an effort by Michael Harrington's Democratic Socialists to collaborate with Ronald Reagan's most die-hard Birchite followers. They formed and operate as one party simply because of the strength of the Communists; if the Christian Democrats had split into radical and conservative wings, the Communists would have been Italy's major party and would have organized the government. The result is that the Christian Democrats have been in power since World War II, without a large-scale, responsible democratic opposition and without the periods out of power that seem necessary if any political party is to go through a periodic self-cleansing process. As a consequence, the Christian Democratic party has been increasingly plagued by governmental corruption, political factionalism, bureaucratic inefficiency and a general inability to govern.

All this is well known by the Italian voters. In the recent elections they faced the old question of Communist long-range intentions, made somewhat fresh by new currents inside the Western Communist parties. If the Communists won the elections, would the result be Communism with a human face à la Czechoslovakia's Dubcek or would it be the kind of Communism that drowned Dubcek's springtime in blood? In the voting that centered around this question, a report on which begins on page 521, the Christian Democrats did not lose; indeed, they gained ground slightly. But the Communists did well too, both political parties profiting at the expense of smaller political groupings with whom the Christian Democrats normally form coalitions. What the Christian Democrats have won, then, is at best

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a breathing spell—perhaps a last chance to survive as a major political force. With inflation raging and well over a million citizens out of work, somehow they must demonstrate that they can face and solve Italy's pressing social and economic problems—and here solid help from the United States in terms of loans and investments will help far more than further lectures from Secretary Kissinger.

The voting in the city of Rome illustrates the dimensions of the Christian Democratic problem. There neither party won a majority, but for the first time the Communists pulled more popular votes and won more seats than the Christian Democrats. This is the direction in which the political wind is blowing, and it is hard to imagine a sharper rebuff for Pope Paul, whose spokesmen had for weeks before the voting warned of the Communist danger to the Eternal City. Divided or not, the Christian Democrats must, in the short time that may be available to them, recapture their sense of moral purpose and political vigor in order to tackle Italy's worst problems. Continued bumbling will certainly mean a political bonanza for the Communists the next time around. And if the political party so intimately related to the church over the years is unable to recapture the moral vigor that is needed, it will be a telling indication that the church in Italy as well as the Christian Democratic party is in serious trouble.

WASHINGTON REPORT

THE DEUTSCHE TREATMENT

In the spring of 1945, as a boy-soldier, I was briefly in the business, along with all my friends, of accepting the surrenders of individuals and groups of German soldiers in northern Italy. Of those I talked to at any length, there was hardly one who did not assure me that the German army was about to be "turned around" and, under the direction of the now demonstrably invincible Americans, spearhead a new and this time final invasion of Bolshevist Russia.

As a last-ditch pipe dream of defeated men-at-arms taught to regard themselves as the world's finest, the turn-around army notion was not without interest, comparable in its way to the contemporary dream of Amanda Wingfield that a gentleman caller would shortly solve all her problems, the earlier dream of Wilkins Micawber that something would turn up.

What has amazed me ever since, however, about that dream of those kaput krauts is that it has all come true and, in an apparently endless series of variations, has dominated European politics and what the Americans imagine is statecraft from those days to these. The latest variation was presented during the recent visit to this city of West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, who announced unilaterally that his country was not going to pay any more marks for the privilege of being protected from the Bolsheviks by the American troops stationed there. President Ford, exhibiting the same hypnotic glaze his predecessors have uniformly exhibited when confronted by the dream of the turn-around army, said that was fine with him, after all they were our troops, why should the Germans pay for them? The way seemed clear for the next variation on the dream-theme, when Schmidt's successor shall demand and receive American payments for the privilege of defending West Germany. The gentleman caller, when you think of it, is supposed to pick up the tab and here we've been playing it Dutch treat all these years.

Those German soldiers I ran into between the Po and the Alps should feel particularly happy, for now it is the Americans doing the spearheading, the Germans the direction, if only, for now, the financial direction.

The Schmidt variation is, of course, only the latest in a long line. The most flamboyant was Richard Nixon's. That interesting figure, on his first venture into foreign policy, denounced what he called "Dean Acheson's College of Cowardly Communist Containment," and advocated a different policy called "rollback," which envisioned pushing the Soviet forces out of the Eastern and Central European nations they had occupied during and after World War II. Although many occasions presented themselves in every capital of the occupied territory, Mr. Nixon managed to get through both the vice-presidency and the presidency without rolling anything back a kilometer, let alone a country. Eventually, he even came to hail Mr. Acheson as a font of wisdom and strength, not a coward after all. To be sure, Mr. Acheson was dead by then and unable to appreciate his vindication.

Mr. Nixon even managed to make peace with the country he formerly denounced as Red China and, more significantly, to endorse, through his Secretary of State, the permanent Soviet occupation of those former rollback countries as making for stability in Europe. And he, and his successor, have done all this without retreating an inch from the dream-theme of those German soldiers.

Mr. Nixon, of course, was perceived as a conservative, even a reactionary, although in truth he seems to

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have been a kind of anarchist. Mr. Kennedy, on the other hand, was perceived as a liberal and he, too, made a memorable contribution to the prolongation of that dream. His famed declaration, *Ich bin ein Berliner*, while actually the equivalent in local idiomatic speech of saying that he was a hot dog, was received with unalloyed enthusiasm in his own country, a nation, to be sure, of hot dog lovers. The declaration and its domestic reception were the more remarkable because such a few years earlier Berliners were here regarded as beasts of a more ferocious, dangerous and treacherous kind than dogs of any temperature.

The motivation of the German soldiers for their turnaround army was simply that Bolshevism was a loathsome, unnatural political disease—whereas Nazism was the berries—and should be attacked by any thinking people, even Americans. The actualization of their dream proceeded on somewhat more complicated premises. In the first place, the dream of those simple soldiers, if retailed to me in Italy, was assuredly retailed also to the Russians in Eastern Europe and in Germany, giving them added motivation, if any were needed, to retake the Eastern Marches buffer provinces that the Czars had held as protection from Western invasions.

Since, whether from such motivation or from ancient pieties about the Motherland, the Russians did indeed occupy the old Empire's former European vassal states plus some lands formerly occupied by the Empire's imperial rivals, Germany and Austria, not to mention the Ottoman Turks, it seemed at least not unreasonable to assume in the West that the Red Army intended to keep going in the direction it had embarked on and take the rest of Europe. Immediately the dream of the German soldiers came true. The German gifts for hostility and aggression were turned around and, under the invincible direction of the Americans, pointed toward the East. Since then, the Soviets have not taken another piece of real estate in Europe or anywhere else, although from time to time they have shot up one capital or another in their Eastern Marches, presumably "to encourage the others" or out of their own profound sense of insecurity, or both. This standstill record can be of course, and no doubt usually is, interpreted as the vindication of the American military presence in Germany and elsewhere: We sent the troops, the rascals have been contained.

The standstill can, however, be interpreted differently: The rascals haven't moved, maybe we were wrong and didn't have to send the troops. Do we need our Army in Germany? Did we ever?

Do the Germans, for that matter? There are 200 million Europeans. If they cannot or will not defend themselves, they probably cannot be defended by anyone else. Their industrial technology is incomparably better than the Russians', the general contentment of citizens with their society similarly higher. Can they defend themselves? Would they defend themselves? Whether they would or not, would the Soviet Union invade and conquer a Europe not defended by the United States army on the spot?

An answer at least to the last question can perhaps be glimpsed in Yugoslavia, in so many ways the most significant Communist country in the world. In the late 1940s, the Russians prepared to add Yugoslavia to the collection of dependencies it was solidifying. The Yugoslavs said simply that if the Russians invaded through Hungary, Roumania and Bulgaria, the Yugoslavs would retreat to the mountains and would fight. They had fought the Nazis, while the French were cheerfully exploring life in the New Order; they would fight the Soviets. They meant it, they were seen as meaning it and the Soviets did not move. They have not moved since.

That Soviet immobility can be interpreted in two ways, both promising for the fate of a Europe without American troops. One, the Soviets would not invade if they thought the locals would fight, since assuredly Yugoslavia was not then and is not now an American military dependency. Two, the Soviet would not invade because Yugoslavia was never part of the Russian European Empire the Soviets were reconstituting.

Neither, of course, was Germany.

The fundamental point we seem to have forgotten somewhere around 1946 is that the reason I was having those chats with the turn-around crowd in rustic settings from Bologna to Trento was that they were there as the last tattered wave of the last serious attempt to conquer Europe and hold it; I was there to frustrate that attempt. The Russians were doing the same thing I was doing.

In short, there was something called World War II. In it the Germans killed everyone they could get their hands on, especially Jews and Slavs of all kinds. In that context it was not unreasonable to imagine that the Germans would do it again if they got the chance and therefore not unreasonable for Russia to reequip itself with the anti-German buffer zone it had so long relied on.

It would be a shame to pass up the chance to get out of Germany at what amounts to an invitation to do so from Chancellor Schmidt. The Chancellor has in effect called the bluff of senators as differing in their general approach to foreign policy as Mansfield and Jackson, both of whom have called for either reductions in force in Germany or for total German assumption of the costs we have now totally assumed ourselves. If ever a foreign policy issue called for electoral campaign debate, this one does.

FRANK GETLEIN

(*Frank Getlein, who took over the Washington Report column on a temporary basis during the illness of Sisyphus, since deceased, will continue as* Commonweal's *regular Washington columnist. Mr. Getlein, a long-time contributor to the magazine, is critic-at-large of the* Washington Star-News.)

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CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

BRINGING BACK DEATH

The fate of over 600 death-row prisoners in 30 states now hangs in precarious balance by virtue of the U.S. Supreme Court's July 2 companion decisions concerning capital punishment. The Court made clear what had been in considerable legal question since its last major pronouncement on the subject in 1972. Then, in the case of *Furman* v. *Georgia*, a bare majority of five Justices found all existing state capital punishment laws unconstitutional because of the arbitrary and "freakish" manner in which the death penalty was imposed. That decision went only to the distribution of death as punishment, and did not deal with the nature of the practice itself.

In response to *Furman*, 35 states and the federal government passed various capital punishment laws designed to eliminate the capricious selection processes which the Court found unconstitutional under the Eighth Amendment's ban on cruel and unusual punishment. Essentially, these statutes removed from judge and jury the discretionary choice as to which of those convicted of certain crimes would die, and required the sentence of death upon conviction for specified offenses. But that, as Justice Stewart's opinion this month recognized, merely pushed discretion back a step or two on the chain of events we call criminal justice. Knowing the inevitable result of their returning a guilty verdict, many juries undoubtedly found ways of acquitting an offender they might otherwise have convicted or of finding him guilty only as to a lesser charge.

One of the main criteria which the Court relied on in finding arbitrary the sentencing pattern in *Furman* was the disproportionate number of minority-group members who were meeting the executioner. Interestingly, the statistics show that in the four years since that decision, the so-called "mandatory" laws have yielded an even more disproportionate number of minority citizens sentenced to die. By its own earlier narrow standard, the Court could thus reasonably have been expected to finally outlaw capital punishment.

Instead, it has merely banned mandatory death sentences for every murder convict, and openly returned the decision, on a case-by-case basis, to judges and juries who must now operate within statutory sentencing guidelines. These statutes must provide judges and juries with adequate information and guidance for determining whether the sentence is appropriate in a particular case; those deciding will have to take account of mitigating as well as aggravating circumstances surrounding the murder's commission. What all this in practice means is that capital punishment is constitutionally available, and that even slightly-modified versions of the "mandatory" laws will probably be acceptable for its imposition.

All of this relates to procedure, not substance. There had been good reason to hope during the past four years that the Court would eventually find the death penalty *per se* in contravention of the Eighth Amendment, not to mention the moral sensibilities of a large segment of the American people. The Court has, for the foreseeable future at least, dispelled such hopes. It has left instead a host of legal problems to be sorted out in that atmosphere of moral ambiguity which characterizes most of the Court's recent determinations with regard to matters of life and death.

Unless and until a future Court majority can bring itself to declare death an inherently cruel and unusual punishment, the practice of state-sanctioned killing will continue in this country. As long as capital punishment remains a constitutionally permissible option, the majority of states will devise ways of employing it which pass muster under the new guidelines. All other questions concerning the issue, no matter what their relative importance, are subordinate to the fundamental moral and philosophical determination. Thus, it is to that aspect of the controversy that I would like now to turn.

During oral argument on the consolidated appeals last spring, the Justices reportedly evidenced lively interest in the death penalty's alleged effectiveness as a deterrent to violent crimes, particularly murder. The academic arguments made in this connection have long since passed the point of wearisome predictability and inconclusiveness. Competing views rooted in differing political and social values come cloaked in the trappings of intellectual "objectivity," as though even if there *were* a definitive empirical answer on the deterrent value of death, that alone would end discussion.

In fact, an ethically principled resolution of the death penalty controversy can never be based solely or primarily on considerations of deterrence. That penal theory asks only: How can we punish this offender so as to most effectively inhibit potential offenders; how can we use this offender's case for purposes of example? The formulation itself suggests the inherent risk, borne out in practice, of discounting an individual's rights now in favor of some projected collective agenda. But deterrence-minded advocates of the death penalty simply *assume* the morality of such a scheme, and quickly proceed to their statistical calculations. They can do so only because their prime goal is general utility, not individual justice.

In their majority opinion, the Justices claim to have

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set little store by the deterrence argument argument in reaching their result. They rested their philosophical case, rather, on the penal rationale known as retribution. But in so doing, they fixed upon one, but by no means the only or most persuasive, implication of that theory for capital punishment. Retribution alone among the justifications for criminal punishment is concerned first and foremost with doing justice in the individual case. It concerns itself with meting out punishment according to the offender's just deserts, measured with reference to the past: retribution shapes his punishment according to what the offender actually did, not according to what he, or others, might possibly do in the future. This approach by no means excludes the additional major penal goals of deterrence and rehabilitation, so long as they are not pursued at the expense of certain human rights and concepts of justice which the Constitution guarantees. Of these, none could be more fundamental than the right to life.

Society clearly has the right (indeed, obligation) to fairly punish a criminal who deserves it. But the correlative questions are no less important than the basic proposition: *Which* punishments are moral, just, and constitutional? The argument here is not that a particular murderer might not justly deserve to die. Rather, the question must be: Can our society impose such a punishment without thereby corroding the very bases of human dignity and respect for life which it is part purpose of a retributivist punishment scheme to preserve? Is the society's general duty to protect human life more compelling than any obligation it might have to administer the otherwise just punishment of death? Still more basic: Can a punishment which takes life be truly just?

I contend that one may consistently uphold the state's general right to punish in society's behalf, and at the same time argue that the state should not have the right to punish by death. Many modern retributivists make a similar argument. They stress that the more important component of a particular punishment is its condemnatory function, its symbolic underscoring of society's serious disapproval of certain conduct. Less important is the actual penalty part of the sentence; it should certainly be commensurate with, but need not be exactly proportionate to, the gravity of the offense. They advocate, in short, a return to punishment based on the concept of just deserts, without a rigidly mechanical adherence to the biblical *lex talionis* ("an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth").

Paradoxical though it might seem to those who automatically associate retribution with the harshest sentences imaginable, it is the only theory of punishment which has a coherent, principled basis from which to oppose their imposition. Two recent retributivistly-oriented proposals to make punishments fair and certain have recommended a generally shorter sentencing scale than that currently prescribed (though rarely enforced) in most American jurisdictions. The key difference is that a sentencing-and-punishment policy grounded on retribution would eliminate plea-bargaining, and, generally, probation and parole. Simply put, a sentence imposed would be a sentence served. Significantly, neither of these proposals called for capital punishment as the appropriate response to murder, thereby taking a position well within the spirit and logic of the retributivist penal theory. The Court, unfortunately, has just chosen a different path.

The main concern in discussion of the death penalty is the value we as a society choose to assign human life, even, and maybe especially, the life of someone found guilty of taking another's life. I say "especially," because the temptation to repay in kind is never stronger, the test of our commitment to preserve life never greater than in this situation. If we collectively allow the state to kill a convicted murderer in our name, it can be on one morally justifiable basis only: because we honestly and strongly believe that justice requires it and that justice will be satisfied by no lesser punishment, however severe.

As we proceed to resolve the myriad of legal complexities left in the wake of the Court's opinion, let us, our legislatures, and our courts no longer hide in the mists of unresolvable, and secondary, debate about deterrence. Let's face the moral issue up-front. If we agree that this convict's just deserts and society's legitimate right to punish him can find mutual fulfillment only in death, then the Supreme Court has not left the door open in vain. But I think we can and must do better than that in devising appropriately severe and certain punishment for this society's murderers, punishment that does not imitate their cheapening of human life.

ROBERT A. PUGSLEY

(Robert A. Pugsley is Robert Marshall Fellow in Civil Liberties, 1976-77, at the Criminal Law Education and Research Center, New York University School of Law, and coordinator of peace education programs for The Christophers.)

COMING

DONALD P. WARWICK writes on compulsory sterilization in India:

"India's resort to coercion sharply raises the question of government rights vs. human rights. The moral issues posed by the initiatives are doubly important because of India's size and fishbowl status in the world community. If the government moves ahead with these programs and—a much bigger if—manages to lower the birth rate, other large nations, such as Pakistan and Indonesia, may be tempted to follow its lead."

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THE FOUR JIMMY CARTERS

PETER STEINFELS

JIMMY CARTER the lay preacher; Jimmy Carter the modernizing engineer and Naval officer; Jimmy Carter the cautious and conventional businessman; Jimmy Carter the activist and ambitious politician. The Democratic party has achieved a remarkable unity by the simple stroke of choosing four men as its candidate for President. *Ex pluribus unum* —and probably victory too. The Republicans, sly devils, are countering by coming as close as humanly possible, within the legal rules of the game, to nominating no one at all. The difference between Ronald Reagan and Gerald Ford is the difference between preferring the total abolition of the presidency to its mere hibernation. This might be seen as the ultimate in anti-politics politics, a last-ditch appeal to the millions of voters who, like Groucho disdaining to join any club of which he was a member, feel that wanting to be President automatically disqualifies any one for the office. The chances are that the GOP strategy will not succeed; that the Carter quadruplets will be able to evince a certain amount of superficial evidence that the Republican candidate actually exists; and that thus enjoying a four-to-one numerical advantage, they will sweep to triumph in November.

All pulling in the same direction, this foursome of Carters should prove formidable when running against their opponent. After the election, they may prove more difficult, when they begin running against themselves. Of course all political figures are susceptible to description in terms of multiples. For years pundits analyzed the "real Nixon," in contrast to any number of false ones, and hailed "new Nixons," succeeding to a parade of old ones. Nixon, however, was available to be kicked around for three decades. For sheer concentration of such effort, what might be termed MPW or musings-per-week, the Carter case is truly exceptional. "A boon to political analysts and theoreticians," Richard Rovere called Carter in *The New Yorker* after the Democratic convention: "Because he is a bird of strange and exotic plumage, he has provided them with steady and challenging work, inspecting him and his record, performing exegetical labors on his speeches and other writings, trying to determine his species and find or invent categories in which he can be placed. Although he has been seen and heard almost daily since the eariy primaries, defining him is a small but thriving cottage industry."

At first the excuse for this expenditure of mental energy was that the man was purposely vague. And so he was, but on closer inspection it became obvious he was no more vague, indeed possibly less, than most presidential candidates since that time when Nicholas Biddle advised the managers of William Henry Harrison, "Let him say not one single word about his principles, or his creed—let him say nothing—promise nothing. Let no Committee, no convention—no town meeting ever extract from him a single word about what he thinks or will do hereafter. Let the use of pen and ink be wholly forbidden."

No, the problem with Carter was not the vagueness of his words. It was the insufficiency of words altogether; it was the absence of what usually reveals the politician behind the words—a relevant record of deeds. As a one-term governor of Georgia, he simply did not face most of the issues which are the test of a President. About Walter Mondale (or, for that matter, Gerald Ford), we can reach a relatively certain judgment, not because he has announced his sentiments clearly and well, which he has, but because he has been compelled to vote them. A hundred more Carter speeches—and there will be a hundred more Carter speeches—will never quite bridge this gap, will never quite resolve the corresponding uncertainty. Thus the quartet of Carters.

If we do not yet know which of the Carters will predominate, it should be recalled that Carter himself may not know either. In relation to the choice in November, this may not make much difference. I prefer any one of the Carters to either of the Republican alternatives. In the long run, however, a great deal hangs on the outcome.

The reason is simply that major questions about the economic and cultural character of our society hang on the verge of resolution. They were posed, to begin with, by the Depression and World War II-decade and a half which radically altered the organization and the self-understanding of the country. Pushed from sight by the immediate demands and national mobilization of the Cold War, these questions burst forth in the Sixties—still with no resolution. For a moment it looked like things were settling into place with the victory of Nixon—the "cooling of America," *Time* called it. But Watergate broke up the ice on that pond. The questions remain.

They are practical questions, to be sure—about unemployment, inflation, racial equality, foreign policy, world trade. But now they are also questions of meaning: Are our institutions worthy of respect; and our authorities, of obedience? What claims upon society, and what sacrifices by citizens, are justly called for? Is the creation of this nation still an open task, or are we now engaged in a holding action? Have democracy and equality reached their outer limits? Is America in truth a City on a Hill, as John

(Continued on page 543)

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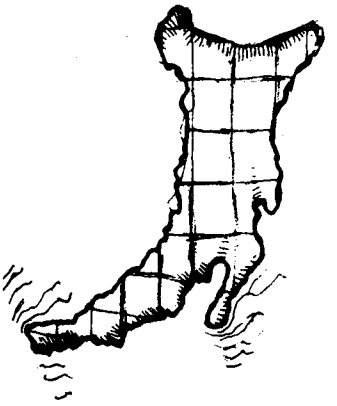
THE ITALIAN ELECTIONS

ROBERT E. PROCTOR



Catholicism is no longer a useful tool for maintaining the status quo

Despite all the political uncertainties that have emerged as a result of the June Italian parliamentary elections, one thing is clear: there is no longer a "Catholic" vote or a "Catholic" party in Italy. Not only did many Catholics vote for the Communists in these elections, but it was primarily a lay, historically anti-clerical electorate that gave the USA- and Vatican-supported Christian Democratic party (DC) enough votes to stage an unexpected comeback.

The results of these elections merit reflection. Given the crisis of capitalism in Italy and what seemed to be the inevitable break-up of the corrupt, scandal-ridden Christian Democratic party, most political observers in Italy and abroad expected these elections to confirm at the national level what had already taken place in local and regional elections a year ago: a strong advance for the Left, especially for the Italian Communist party (PCI), and a regression for the DC. And in fact, the PCI did spectacularly well, winning 34 percent of the vote for the Chamber of Deputies, a remarkable increase of 7.2 percent since the last national parliamentary elections in 1972. The Left as a whole (Communist, Socialist, and Far Left) won 46.6 percent, its highest combined total since the war. But the DC, to the surprise of many, polled 38.7 percent, thereby making up its losses from last year (when it fell to 35.5 percent) and maintaining the same percentage of votes it had won four years ago. The DC has thus held onto its position as the relative majority party in Italy.

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The significance of the DC's comeback, however, lies not so much in the fact that it managed to remain ahead of the PCI, but that it was able to do so only by taking votes away from two of its traditional allies in the Center and on the Right, the Social Democrats (PSDI) and the Liberals (PLI). The PSDI vote fell from 5.1 percent in 1972 to 3.4 percent, while the PLI's losses were even greater: from 3.9 percent to 1.3 percent. These are traditionally bourgeois and petty bourgeois lay parties which for years have been completely subordinate to and at times indistinguishable from the DC in their politics and programs. That the Christian Democrats were able to recuperate votes only at the expense of these small parties means that the DC has continued to lose not only its peasant- and working-class base, but what used to be its "Catholic" electorate as well, that is, an electorate which cut across class lines and which identified with what was supposed to be the DC's "religious" inspiration. This bloc of Catholic votes no longer exists as such, for in these elections Italians tended to vote according to class interest, not religious affiliation. The Italian bourgeoisie threw its weight fully behind the DC, even at the risk of compromising the political futures of the PSDI and the PLI, since it saw in the DC the only force capable of stopping the expected Communist advance. And the Catholicism of significant sectors of the Italian working- *and* middle-classes did not keep them from voting for social and economic change, which meant voting for the Left, especially the PCI.

The first clear indication that the formerly conservative bloc of Catholic votes was beginning to disappear came two years ago, when Italian voters unexpectedly rejected the referendum for the repeal of divorce sponsored by the Vatican and the Christian Democrats. To

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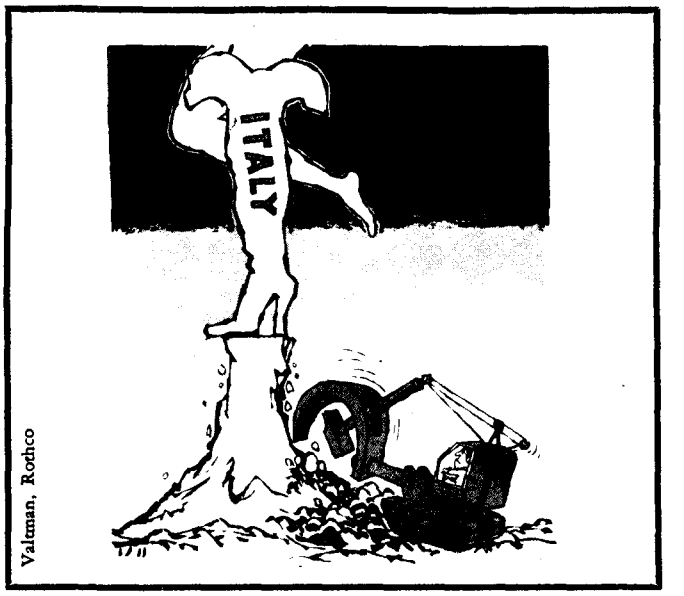
be a Catholic no longer meant to vote according to the wishes of the Church or for the DC. What the results of these recent parliamentary elections now confirm is that to be a Catholic no longer means that one must be anti-Communist. Despite the efforts of the Christian Democrats and the Church hierarchy to appeal to the religious sentiments of Italian voters, the question of Catholicism vs. Communism, of "God or Marx" (as one anti-Communist flyer put it!) never became a major issue during the campaign. In fact, the Red-scare mounted by the Vatican was much less extensive than many people on the Left—who remembered the virulently anti-Communist campaign of 1948—expected, probably because of the opposition the Church hierarchy encountered from the laity after it launched its first anti-Communist harangues and threats of excommunication at the Italian Bishops' Conference in May. In this regard it is interesting to note that a reporter who made a point of listening to sermons in churches in Rome on Sunday morning, June 20, the first day of the elections, wrote in the widely-read *Corriere della sera* that he didn't hear one anti-Communist sermon.

There are both socio-economic and ideological reasons why Catholicism is no longer a useful tool in Italy for maintaining the social and economic status quo. Ironically, it is above all the development of capitalism itself that has destroyed the socio-economic base of religious conservatism here. The rapid growth of the big export-oriented industries after the war slowly moved the poor peasant masses out of the Southern countryside and into the big industrial cities of the North. In so doing it broke up the small, barely self-sufficient rural production units centered around the family, units which were traditionally conservative and religiously oriented, often to the point of superstition. Farmers became industrial workers, joined unions, and began to struggle in the factories for higher wages and better working conditions. And in the factories and the cities they lost their rural resignation and respect for authority. At the same time expanding means of communication—the press, public discussions and debates, etc—were gradually bringing the urban and rural populations closer together, and putting large numbers of traditional Catholics into contact with the workers' movement, Marxism and the ideals of socialism.

Finally, progressive elements within the Church itself doubtlessly stimulated a growing dialogue between Marxism and Christianity. Pope John XXIII's emphasis on the close connection between the Catholic faith and social justice made it easier for many Catholics to see the unions and the parties on the Left as organizations which were actively struggling for a better, more just society.

In the final analysis, not only does Catholicism no longer provide a reliable ideological bulwark from behind which the Vatican, the Christian Democratic party, and Italian capitalists can try to preserve the status quo,



but the desire of many Italian Catholics to live the Gospel in today's world is itself becoming a growing force for social change. The number of grassroots Catholic groups organized around the belief that the Gospel can be realized only in a truly socialist society has grown rapidly in the past few years. And, significantly, not only did a number of prominent Catholic intellectuals run as independent candidates on the PCI's ticket in these elections, but for the first time priests themselves publicly supported parties on the Left. The fact that the Italian Communist party is now the leading party in the city of Rome points to the direction in which the Italian people seem to be moving.

Instance of Ferment

The following letter, which appeared in the June 17 edition of the New Left newspaper *il manifesto,* gives some idea of the degree to which a concern for social justice and a desire to work actively for a socialist society are fermenting within the Italian clergy. It is an open letter Father Sandro Vesce wrote to the Bishop of Modena. In it Father Vesce announces his intention to leave the priesthood and to vote for Proletarian Democracy *(Democrazia proletaria),* a unified electoral slate of candidates from the three major Far-Left parties in Italy.

"Monsignore, six years ago I realized that my faith would not last if I continued to breathe the closed air stagnating in the parishes and Catholic organizations after the Council, and it seemed to me that as a catholic priest, that is, as everyone's priest, my place was with the masses, with the people, with those who were baptized but no longer practicing Catholics. It was for this reason first of all that I became a worker. But from that time on, despite my continued efforts and the efforts of many others, the clergy and traditional Christians have done nothing but widen the gap that separates them from the people. By now two kinds of Christians have been

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formed, those attached to traditional values, and those inclined to live the faith in a way which adheres to the new reality of today. In this articulation of the Church, in which the clergy solidly chose traditional positions, my personal problem became one of deciding on whose side I stood. Until a little while ago I was under the illusion—or perhaps things weren't so bad—that we could all proceed ahead together, even if with great difficulty. I was a worker and also a priest. I was a practicing Catholic and one who sided with the Left. I lived like the common people and no one criticized me for being a bad Christian. So the Council did count for something.

"But now, as the final blow, it is the Pope himself who declares that those of us who run as independent candidates on the PCI's electoral ticket separate ourselves from the Church—and I, who believe I must define myself a Communist, and who, having no need for Catholic candidates, will vote PCI for the Senate and Proletarian Democracy for the Chamber of Deputies! The Church mounted a campaign against legalizing abortion, and once every other possibility of aid had been exhausted, I helped a woman who had decided to have an abortion! Once again the Church has issued repressive decrees concerning sex, and I, who live in the midst of today's young men and women, have always thought that we had a lot to learn from their free attitudes, and never gave any of them reasons to be troubled about their morals! Priests are asked to give up everything and return to the confessional, and I, as by now very many others, can no longer bring myself to go to confession!

"Monsignore, I am not writing you this to scandalize you or as some stupid form of boasting. It is because I have faith in telling the truth, and if I maintain that it is necessary to recognize openly the existence of two different ways of conceiving what it means to be a Christian, it is because, among other things, this seems to me the only way of avoiding irreparable damage. If we deceive ourselves into believing that between the two ways of being a Christian there does not exist a profound difference of feeling and experience, and if you continue to outlaw dissidents and we continue to conceive of your form—which we don't like—as the only form in which Christianity lives, then truly a very serious situation will have arisen, and the Church will be infinitely impoverished. It seems to me that in this way you become more and more embittered and we dry up and go our own ways.

"With this letter, which is public, just as to be or not to be a priest is public, I ask you to count me among all those Christians who are looking for new and different paths. I give back to you the priesthood which I received from your predecessor because I do not believe in mediations which have no objective base in reality: to build something one must stand totally with those with whom he lives and struggles. Nor on the other hand is it possible to fail oneself. Just as you in reality do not resist the pressures of traditional Christians because deep inside of you you agree with them, so too I feel close to all those who are working for the emergence of new values which by now no traditional system can substitute for. I refer to the abolition of the division of labor; to the battle against social stratification; to women's winning their own identity; to the freedom of the young not to be indoctrinated and put down; to the elderly's right to maintain an active role in society even when retired; to children, who must not be treated as things or cute little animals any longer, but as human beings right from the beginning; to our prosperity, which must not be paid out of the exploitation of slaves in the factories; to a spiritual power, finally, which does not support vested interests, but which finds its own reason for being in defending social outcasts: today prisoners, homosexuals, subproletarians, deviants, those who cannot bring themselves to work, tomorrow those who will be new scapegoats. Society prefers conformists and Christianity will always be made up of nonconformists, beginning with Jesus, condemned as a criminal, and continuing up to the criminals of today. How many persons wear a cross around their necks without knowing that it was once an act of defiance, equivalent to offering oneself up to the gallows.

"I thus give up my priesthood in the hope that my choice will be at the service of the needs of the collectivity and of the Church, and not, but also, in order to be, much more simply, true to myself and to what matters to me. I am convinced that violence to others begins always with violence to oneself. In fact, the commandment is 'love your neighbor as yourself,' not 'love your neighbor,' as it is usually read. Here is one thing we could offer today to everyone as being truly in the spirit of the Gospel and as an announcement of liberty: give up every exasperated obligation of having to be someone or something, recognize your own needs, don't hide behind this or that alibi, live the occasions and confrontations life offers serenely and without fear.

"I say this to give myself courage, because I do not always succeed in having this tranquillity—in fact, often just the opposite is true. As one approaches forty, he fears losing his role, not wanting to take another way in life when so many choices are already precluded. Often one is not disposed to make room within himself for these words of our Lord: 'You shall not finish the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.' And then too perhaps you have no idea of how dear being a priest has been to me. I became a priest when I was already an adult. I asked for it myself. But I never considered it an absolute, for it is against the faith to have idols to burn incense to. I think that if some other modality of life can serve better, one must be confident in looking for it and in following it.

"Confirming my commitment to the Gospel, . . ."

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THE 'RELIGIONS' OF ITALY

LAWRENCE S. CUNNINGHAM

Like the Italian Left, the Church is far from being a monolith

I think it was the Harvard student travel guide to Europe that waspishly (pun intended) remarked that after a week in Italy one was gagging on pasta and cathedrals. Certainly ecclesiastical architecture plus the presence of the Vatican bears eloquent witness to the Catholic character of Italy, a catholicity not only attested to in its cultural artifacts but legitimated in concordat and law; the legitimation concretized by the ever present crucifix found in classroom, courtroom and public office throughout the country. It is equally well known that Italy has vast enclaves of anti-Catholic sentiment most clearly manifested in the largest Communist Party outside the Eastern Bloc in Europe together with the older tradition of anti-clericalism endemic in liberal politics and the old line socialism found in such provinces as Emilia.

There is, then, a general tendency to view Italy as having two monolithic forces competing for absolute control over the Italian spirit. The paradigm of this view has been supplied in the novels of Guareschi who entertained vast numbers of readers with the struggles of the redoubtable Don Camillo struggling with his friend/enemy Peppone, the Communist mayor. Closer observers of the Italian political scene realize that such a simplistic dichotomy simply will not do. Despite the tight discipline of the Italian Communist party, the political Left in reality is fragmented into competing sub-parties that range from the intellectually respectable *Manifesto* Movement to the numerically small, but highly active, Maoist groups that manage to fill Italian headlines with their acts of industrial sabotage, criminal violence and political kidnappings. Nor are relations between the Left and the Catholic Church always so rigidly divided: witness the more Marxist orientation of the Catholic Labor Movement and the Movement for Christian Socialism.

This mosaic-like picture of the political Left in Italy has a mirror image in the Italian Catholic Church. Despite its image outside of the country (fostered, in no small part, by transalpine theological critics who are forever talking about the Italian-dominated Curia), the Italian Catholic Church is far from being a monolithic structure. Giuliano della Pergola (in *Testimonianze* #150) has disentangled at least four diverse currents in the contemporary Italian Church. His analysis uses a horizontal line model moving from right to left, but without any nuanced analysis of relative numerical strength or ideological clout on the larger population; his purpose being more to assess intellectual positions and less to assess the power base. At the extreme right of the spectrum stands traditional Catholicism with its more or less acceptance of a Tridentine ecclesiology; a fierce anti-Communism; its conviction that Vatican II should be seen only as a cosmetic job on the unchanging face of *Sancta Mater Ecclesia*; its close ties with the rightist elements of the Christian Democratic Party; its obsessive fear of "modern culture." Slightly to the left of this position are those groups—fairly influential in Italian public life—who are more socially oriented in their politics, mildly critical of the religious and clerical structures of the Vatican, and more inclined to experimentation with newer parish forms or alternatives to parish structure.

This "Catholicism of *Aggiornamento*" has attracted a fair number of university intellectuals and political figures who still feel firmly attracted to, and rooted in, the intellectual tradition of Catholicism. Still moving to the left are those groups who have opted for a more intimate, small-group based spirituality with a highly active social program oriented either to the domesitc scene (one thinks of the student groups such as *Giovent Studentesca*) or to the larger problems of the world and especially to the world of the underdeveloped nations (e.g. *Mani Tese* which bears a close similarity to the English *Oxfam* movement). These groups tend towards an intense evangelical spirituality and show, at least among some of their numbers, a "benign indifference" towards ecclesiastical authority. At the extreme left of the ecclesial spectrum are the now fairly numerous dissident Catholic groups who are in open contestation with the hierarchy and, in some cases, with an open rupture from ecclesiastical authority. These communities are openly sympathetic to working class inspirations, rely heavily on a Marxist analysis of the social situation, and cultivate close ties both with other Christian bodies and the extra-parliamentary Left. Some of the priest leaders of these communities are married and almost all have secular occupations in order to sup-

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port themselves. Because of the immense amount of publicity that several of these groups have received in the Italian and foreign press (notably the community of Isolotto near Florence and Oregina near Genoa), their significance has perhaps been overestimated; still the passion with which the newspapers and journals in Italy follow their fortunes reflect not only a desire for scandal but also a sympathy (even in some of the more centrist press) to the critique that they make of Italian Catholicism. They probably will remain somewhat emarginated though, since they are alienated from bourgeous sensibilities and are unsympathetically identified with leftist politics by the non-leftist majority.

Della Pergola's classification of the Italian Church is not totally satisfactory for the simple reason that, like most similar taxonomies, it cannot fit all of the currents of religion into a neat classication. Della Pergola, for one thing, does not take into account the rise of the Evangelicals (such as the Waldensians) who are now less in a cultural ghetto and more and more socially aware. In short, Della Pergola equates Italian religion with Italian Catholicism. For that reason it is interesting to muse on a paper written a few years ago by Robert Bellah (as yet, as far as I can determine, unpublished in this country) on "The Five Religions of Modern Italy."

Bellah conceives of religion in a far broader context than institutional religion; for the purpose of the paper, religion is described under the rubric of "systems of ultimate meaning." Under this rubric (and borrowing somewhat, but adding to Benedetto Croce), Bellah sees five religions in Italy that range from the intensely experiential to the more intensely intellectual and/or philosophical.

Bellah distinguishes (and quite rightly, I believe) a "sub-Christian" or "pre-Christian" religion that often is lumped under the general heading of Catholicism. This sub-Christian religion, still not uncommon in the South of the country, is essentially a Mediterranean fertility cult based on the worship of the *Magna Mater* that finds expression in Catholic forms of Marian devotion or the cult of the saints. Officially tolerated by the Church, this "sub-Christian" strain has been depicted in the writings of novelists such as Carlo Levi, in travel writers such as H. V. Morton and Norman Douglas, and by various scholars. For the people of the Deep South in Italy, this religion is, to use the words of Bellah, "real" religion as opposed to the "legal" religion embodied in the teachings of the priests and the bishops.

Outside the ken of these forms of Catholicism there are two opposed and competing forms of religiousness: the idealistic liberalism of Croce and the dynamic Marxist socialism of Antonio Gramsci. Croce had in mind the liberalism of the nineteenth century which he saw as personal, idealistic and historically organic. It was a total humanistic world view. It had a defect, and it was the Marxist Antonio Gramsci who pinpointed it: Liberalism was a religion only for the elite and Croce himself, somewhat patronizingly, felt that Catholicism would remain the religion of the masses. Gramsci's criticism seems on target since in the practical order, liberalism in the Crocean sense exerts little appeal today in Italy and its few savants are identified with a miniscule Liberal Party. Yet, as Bellah noted, it had its influence on the development of Italian political awareness in its day.

Antonio Gramsci proposed an alternative worldview that could make its appeal to the large masses of the working class in Italy—a worldview that was dialectical, revolutionary and socialist. This worldview (though not necessarily in the Gramscian mode) is vividly alive in the industrial north today and, as Bellah notes, forms a quasi-religious subculture: the fraternity of the union; the liturgy of the demonstration and the rally; the ethics of the thirst for social justice.

According to Bellah, the fifth religion of Italy is what Croce called "activism" but what we, unrestrained by a hostile regime as was Croce, more commonly call fascism. It is a morbidly romantic view of life that appeals to a pseudo-reading of history and a glorification of what was belligerent, necrophiliac and socially nihilistic; yet still a religion Croce said; the historical celebration of the Black Mass. D'Annunzio was the prophet of the movement while it culminated in Mussolini's attempt to instill a fervent acceptance of Roman Destiny and a Neo-Roman Empire. Its residue is in the small, but noisy Neo-Fascist part of today (M.S.I.) which carries on the tradition of the clenched fist, the black shirt and delirious dreams of Italy's glorious past.

Less Cheery Picture

Bellah's analysis of religious strains in Italy is valuable for its systematic study of the interfaces of Italian "Civil Religion." In Italy itself, sociological analysis of the current state of Italian religion has not as yet systematically explored this intricate network of value systems. It has done, however, a goodly amount of work on the condition of the Roman Catholic Church in the country and this analysis has revealed less than a cheery picture of rapid urbanization, the depression of the agricultural culture with its accompanying decline a rural based religious practice, and ideological spasms in the Church itself in these post-aggiornamento years.

Bare statistics give some indication of the shift in religious practice. According to a recent *Doxa* survey (an opinion research center of national reputation), 53 percent of the Italian people were regular communicants in 1956; that number dropped to 40 percent in 1960; to 35 percent in 1965; the most recent soundings, done in 1974, sets the figure at 30 percent. There are few indications to show that this decline will be reversed in the near future. A more specialized survey, reported in the semi-authoritative Jesuit magazine *Civiltá Cattolica*

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[October 5, 1974; pp. 73-80], surveyed some pastorally oriented sociological research done in working class enclaves north of Rome in and around the city of Orvieto: 70 percent of the adults surveyed favored forms of birth control beyond the periodic abstinence allowed by Pope Paul's *Humanae Vitae*; 53 percent felt that the Church had no competency in matters of divorce; and 72 percent felt that the Church had no real interest in or understanding of the working class.

The major efforts of the Italian government to industrialize the country after the post-war reconstruction period has caused massive movements of essentially emarginated people to leave the rural areas in search of work in the cities. This immigration has been a major source of religious dislocation given the fact that in 1950 over half the parishes in Italy were in areas that had less than a thousand people in them. In the Roman suburb of San Basilio, with a population that ranges from thirty to forty thousand people (the *Commune* is just not sure of the number), the median income *per capita* is about $25 in an economy that has a price scale approaching that of the United States and a 24 percent rate of inflation. Church practice in such *borgate* is minimal while the "new religious" of the extreme Leftists receive an enthusiastic hearing and are phenomenally successful at convert making.

Yet the slippage of the Catholic Church is not confined merely to the proletarian classes. There are some preliminary indicators to show that the Church's moral influence is also failing with the middle classes. The referendum of May 12, 1974, in which the voters were asked to decide whether the earlier passed divorce laws should be repealed or not, was a real shock to both the Christian Democratic party and the Roman Catholic Church. The referendum was overwhelmingly in favor of the retention of the divorce laws with favorable majorities in previously solid areas of Catholic influence. Even in the cities of Sicily, notoriously conservative in these matters, the pro-divorce factions won handy majorities. While there was been an intense debate on the significance of the referendum issue since May 1974 (the articles of George Galli, Arturo Parisi, Luigi Pedrazzi and Roberto Leonardo in the June issue of *Il Mulino*, pp. 396-468 were quite perceptive), there is still no widespread consensus as to whether the referendum was a grassroots rejection of the pretensions of the Christian Democratic party alone or whether the Italian mentality has been dramatically secularized in these more recent years. There is some consensus though, that the Catholic Church has suffered a great blow to its moral prestige and, apart from the question of the motivation behind the vote, it will be increasingly harder for the Church to command total attention on ethical matters. This is crucial since Italy is now gearing up for a massive fight both at the governmental and popular level over the question of liberalized laws about abortion. Since the victory of the Lay political parties in France on this issue, there has been a high feeling that the same victory could very well be achieved in Italy. There is no doubt that this struggle will be the ultimate test of the Catholic Church's power in Italy since the Church is far more committed to an anti-abortion stand than it ever was on the question of divorce.

It seems that one who takes a close look at the Italian scene must firmly eschew the popular clichés about a highly organized and tightly monolithic religious structure in Italy. Della Pergola's analysis shows the diverse nature of the Catholic Church just as the sociological analysis of many shows just how shaky the mainline Church is in fact. Nor do I think that one can simply enlarge the picture with Bellah's categories since they do not do justice to the shifting allegiances and the degree of flexibility now endemic to the Italian religious scene. My own feeling is, after having been in Italy for three years since 1970, that religiously speaking, one should take to heart the dictum of Heraclitus: all things are in flux.

ROY SCHEELE

COMB HONEY

The cells gave way
beneath our spoons
until the plate
ran gold and drooled
and the honey
worked clear at last.
No one could eat fast
enough just then
or take in all
the sticky mess
in one greedy
gulp of a glance.
Our hands drove in
and took a chance,
no more bothered
by each other
than by the bits
of scaly wax
that strung out the taste
on the tongue, such
was the hunger
we brought to it.
Having broken
the seal and eaten,
we ate to the full,
leaving the rest
to fill, sweeten
and start to pool.

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BICENTENNIAL ON DEATH ROW

LOIS SPEAR

The discrepancy between the myth and the reality

North Carolina joined her sister states with a year-long Bicentennial celebration, including the usual July Fourth parades, picnicking, and oratory. Known as the Old North State of the original thirteen, the state claims two additional honors: the first colony to vote for independence from England and the birthplace of three Presidents. This year's celebration tended to be elaborate and the rhetoric florid, setting off in clearer relief than in many other states the gap between the myths we cherish about our national past and the reality we see around us daily. Headlines and news coverage appearing in the special, Bicentennial issue of the morning newspaper, *The News and Observer,* sharply etched in the contrasts.

The headline, "Thomas Jefferson, with Freedom in His mind, Made Nation Free, Gave World Freedom Formula," seems strangely incompatible with the state's legal system that placed 122 men on death row. Reformers in the state shared the sentiments of Chief Justice Susie Sharp who warned recently that prison conditions were "inconsistent with the professed standards of a Christian people and demand our immediate attention and correction." Yet, it took a Supreme Court decision to overturn the state's capital punishment laws. And the ink had barely dried on that decision before Lieutenant Governor Jim Hunt, who is also the front-running candidate for the Democratic nomination for governor (primary, August 17), declared on WRAL-TV on July 6 that, if elected, he would recommend that stiff penalties for crime be made mandatory.

Many of the celebrations in the state capital, Raleigh, and surrounding Wake County centered on historic sites. Visitors could admire the recently renovated state capitol building, visit Mordecai House, or the birthplace of Andrew Johnson. Under the headline, "Wake County Abounds with Historic Sites," a list of historic places had been compiled. Included in the list was "Central Prison—built 1869-1884 by prison labor." Unlike the majority of the state's historic sites which are no longer being used, this decrepit, maximum security facility has approximately 1,250 prisoners crammed into a space designed to accommodate 860 people. In the hospital wing of the prison, the Reverend Benjamin Chavis, civil rights activist, continues his fast.

Chavis' friends associate him with the port city of Wilmington, whose strategic location caused it to play a significant role in the American Revolution. In the later antebellum period, runaway slaves tended to gather here in hopes of boarding foreign ships and working their way to freedom. The Bicentennial ball was held in this city and the state's first Republican governor in over seventy years, Jim Holshouser, sliced pieces from a giant, 300 lb., 5-foot-high birthday cake. It was in this city that Ben Chavis—currently in Central Prison—and nine other young people, the "Wilmington 10," allegedly committed the "conspiracy" that netted them a total of 282 years in prison. Supporters of Chavis contend that he is a "political prisoner," an activist who is so articulate that he threatens the state's white power structure.

The Bicentennial issue of the local paper headlined a myth the state fondly cherishes: "It was N.C. That First Approved Independence." This is a reference to the Halifax Resolves of April 12, 1776, presumably making the state the first one to opt for independence, though many professional historians vigorously deny this claim. It is a short distance from Halifax to Henderson in Vance County whose citizens purchased a full-page ad in the Bicentennial issue to describe how their town and county participated in the Revolution. On July 6, in Henderson the trial got underway for the wife of a Free Will Baptist Minister, Sandra Dupree, who was charged with shooting Harry Dickens in Scotland Neck. As the prosecution rested its case, Golden Frinks, field director of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and a handful of his supporters protested outside the courtroom because Mrs. Dupree had been given bail when, under similar circumstances, it had been denied to blacks. While the trial was in progress, many of the state's civil rights leaders, instead of joining Frinks, preferred to maintain a low profile, apparently believing that the evidence in the case was so overwhelming that the minimum sentence Mrs. Dupree could receive would be voluntary manslaughter; the defendant admitted firing the fatal shot hitting Dickens in the back of the head. On July 10 when the verdict of not guilty was announced, stunned members of the black community met to plan some form of public protest.

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A degree of concern with the historic basis to blacks' demands for equal treatment under the law can be surmised from the headline, "58 Blacks Served in Army of Washington." Yet, on July 8, the state asked the federal courts to reverse an earlier ruling overturning the requirement that, before an applicant could obtain a teaching license in North Carolina, he must make a minimum score of 950 on the Princeton National Teachers Examination. The black community considers the NTE highly discriminatory; only one other state, South Carolina, kept this certification requirement until it was overturned by the courts. In Durham on July 7, civil rights lawyer, Jerry Paul, prepared to stand trial on charges made by the N.C. Bar Association. The charges, arising from the Joanne Little case, could lead to disbarment. Joanne Little is the young black woman who was acquitted on charges stemming from the slaying of her jailer in Washington, N.C. Paul's time for his own defense is limited, because he has undertaken the case of William McLaughlin, who died on July 12 during a routine physical checkup in Central Prison. Authorities of the Scotland County prison unit near Wagram, where McLaughlin was imprisoned, face charges of willfully neglecting the ailing prisoner.

Very Special Day

In Raleigh a variety of entertainments made July 4 a very special day. In Moore Square you could listen to jazz and blue-grass music. Nash Square hosted an arts and crafts display. At the state fairgrounds the Pershing Rifles Brigade of N.C. State University drilled for the entertainment of spectators. The Richfield Cloggers from Stanley County shook the stage at nearby Norton Arena. For Robert Denton, the 19-year-old inmate of the McDowell Prison Unit in Marion, July 4 should have been a special day also, for it meant homecoming after finishing a twelve-month term for obstruction of justice. Another prisoner, Ronald Denny, had no such expectations, for he had served only thirty days of a two-year sentence. Both of them, along with six other inmates, were killed and over twenty seriously burned in a fire they enkindled with their highly flammable prison mattresses. They were protesting a disciplinary measure: the confiscation of radios that had been used without earplugs. While older, seasoned prisoners looked on and were safely evacuated from cellblock B, the doors of cellblock A remained locked while the thick smoke and flames burned and suffocated eight of the prisoners, most of whom were young men serving time for misdemeanors. A ninth died July 16 of burns.

The discrepancy between the myth and reality that these incidents point out appears in every state's oratory as the Fourth of July rolls around. North Carolina is not the only state to demonstrate the ambiguity between freedom preached and basic freedoms safeguarded. But the contradictions are more open here—from the proud claim on the license plates, "First in Freedom," to the ghostly specter of Central Prison and the tragic death of eight young men in the McDowell Prison Unit fire . . . not to mention the state's economic problems indicated by its lack of unionization and low median income level. In the South, you can see the contradictions laid open on the pages of a newspaper. In the long run, that may be more open and honest than in many northern cities. And yet, it's chilling, like watching a Kafka drama, to see so many Tarheels—serious, well-meaning citizens—simply ignore the pictures of the burned out McDowell Prison unit, moving quickly to snaps of Holshouser cutting the birthday cake in Wilmington.

PRESENT AT THE CREATION

THE SCREEN

In *Buffalo Bill and the Indians*, Robert Altman has taken American history and folded it back against itself as if he wanted to make an enormous Rorschach card out of it—as if he wanted to use it therapeutically so that in the study of its murky squiggles we might discover ourselves. Of course Altman's work always strikes us as being, like a Rorschach card, a chaos of forces, an art whose implications have run wild. Using an eight-track sound system, he overlaps dialogue in such a way that we only get what is being said in bits and snatches, and the action in his films often seems equally layered and intermittent. It's like watching a three-ring circus from the end of the arena, each scene a jumble of events that occur simultaneously in foreground and background. In *Nashville* it seemed Altman wanted to do away with plot altogether and simply allow a couple of dozen characters to criss-cross paths like so many contestants in a demolition derby.

Yet in any Altman film we also have the sense a Rorschach card immediately gives us that there is some overall design here. There is an encompassing symmetry, and aesthetic order to help us compensate for the formlessness and muddle of events. In *Buffalo Bill and the Indians*, for example, we notice that the scenes marking the beginning and end of Sitting Bull's career with Buffalo Bill's show are curious mirror images of each other. Both are receptions, the first in honor of the arrival of Sitting Bull himself (Frank Kacquitts), the second in honor of a visit from President Grover Cleveland (Pat McCormick).

In the first scene Buffalo Bill (Paul Newman) hails the great hulk of an Indian who rides head and shoulders above the rest of his people. Unfortunately, this turns out to be Halsey (Will Sampson), Sitting Bull's inter-

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preter. Sitting Bull is the runt with a far-away look in his eyes behind Halsey. In the second scene Bill makes eyes at a lyric-soprano traveling in President Cleveland's retinue. While she sings at the President's reception, Bill glories in the glances and gestures she throws his way. It is "an invitation impossible to resist," he confides to her afterwards. But it then comes to light that her overtures were directed at General Benjamin, the runt with pomaded hair just behind Bill.

The reverse images of one another that these two scenes present reflect a single truth about Bill: that his intuition of the world, his judgment of people and events, his eye for intention and authenticity, is unswervingly wrong. In the first scene it is his illusions about someone else that misguide him, in the second it is his illusions about himself, but the effect is the same. In the scene of Sitting Bull's arrival, once he has figured out who Sitting Bull is, Bill again tries to welcome him to "my Wild West," as he calls the tent city and arena he has built at Fort Ruth, Colorado. "I think you'll find it ain't all that different than the real world," he assures the Sioux chief. But Bill is wrong about this too, of course, for the point is that his Wild West is the world of flim-flam that was to replace the real world as our national heritage. (Our great grandfathers had Buffalo Bill. We've got the Bicentennial.)

In effect Altman's whole film is about the relationship between illusion and substance, fakery and the genuine article, and the difficulty of telling them apart. Sometimes Altman makes us aware of this difficulty by showing us an image—in a painting, a mirror or a photograph—instead of its subject. At other times, when he is at his best, he creates our awareness through a disparity between what we see and what we hear. The dashing figure Bill cuts shooting skeet with a pistol is undermined by a letter being read to him in which his wife accuses him of stinginess, drunkenness, infidelity, etc. A toast Bill is drinking to himself is paralyzed halfway to his mouth by a remark Ned Buntline (Burt Lancaster) makes that "It was the thrill of my life to have invented you." While Annie Oakley (Geraldine Chaplin) strides out of the arena after attempting an impossible shot, her lover-manager (John Considine) capers behind smiling and waving to the crowd. As he basks in her glory and takes her bows, however, we can hear her accusing him of cowardice, and we can hear him pleading with her not to rush off because, "God knows, I can't do the act myself."

Annie's performance in this scene also cues us to another of those ink-blot symmetries in the film, perhaps the central one. In this reciprocation of scenes, the night show done for President Cleveland becomes the counterpart of the day show when Annie stalks off. Again at the night show Annie exits prematurely, though it's not because her manager has screwed up this time. It's because she has, blowing a hole in his shoulder. Just as he tries to cover up her departure with bows earlier, as if it were part of the act, so now she tries to cover his. Bill's functionaries even persuade the President that the hole he sees in Annie's manager is play acting, a part of the performance. The purpose of "the" show business, which Bill and partner Nate Salsbury (Joel Grey) are inventing right before our eyes in this movie, is to sucker the audience into accepting performance as reality. But the unforeseen danger, which Annie's little mishaps reveal, is that we shall begin to take everything for performance, and lose our ability to recognize what's real.

The sub-title of Altman's film is *Sitting Bull's History Lesson*, and in the playing out of the parallel Annie's act establishes between these scenes in the arena, we see what the lesson is. In each scene, the act that follows Annie's is Sitting Bull's. But at least in the first scene, act is the wrong word, for Sitting Bull only rides to the center of the arena and sits there. Bill has predicted that because Sitting Bull refuses to perform in any way, he is going to be humiliated. But after jeers and then uncertain silence, the crowd is won over just by the presence of Sitting Bull. He rides off to an ovation as Bill paces sulkily in the wings, having demonstrated once again his unerring misjudgment of men and events.

The second time we see Sitting Bull in the arena, at the command performance for the President, it demonstrates that he has in supernatural abundance the very qualities Bill lacks: insight, intuition, judgment. Sitting Bull has joined the Wild West only because he dreamed he would meet "the Great Father" there—a dream Bill finds so laughable, he has given Sitting Bull a contract with a release clause should the President ever come to Fort Ruth. Where Sitting Bull's first appearance in the arena proves wrong Bill's prediction he would be humiliated, the President's attendance at his second appearance proves his own dream right.

The history lesson Sitting Bull has for Bill, then, is that it is a greater thing to be than to seem. It is that character is ultimately more durable, and maybe even more powerful, than mere cunning. I don't think Bill learns the lesson, though, and the implication is that we haven't either. Bill has his own dream to contend with, a dream that is a source not of enlightenment, like Sitting Bull's, but of torment. After Sitting Bull has been killed, Bill dreams that the Chief comes back to visit him one night at Fort Ruth. Sitting Bull says nothing. He is simply present, as he was the first time he appeared in Bill's arena. But his presence alone is an unnerving accusation. It affects Bill much the way the apparition of Clarence affects Richard III, and like Richard, Bill delivers a distraught monologue, a soliloquy on himself to himself. Apparently Bill still thinks that he has to teach history to Sitting Bull, instead of the other way round. But as we can all tell by now, even if Bill himself can't, his kind of history is, as Sitting Bull once observed, "nothing more than disrespect for the dead."

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

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POETRY IN PERFORMANCE

BARRY WALLENSTEIN

Echoes of tribal ritual and religious rites

I

MUCH has been said over the past ten years or so about the resurgence of oral poetry, which flourished in a more or less organized way around the mid 1950s in New York and San Francisco. Poets such as Kenneth Rexroth, Kenneth Patchen, Allen Ginsberg and the Beats were a part of this development. These poets were not merely reading literature aloud in a conscious effort to recover an oral poetry; their activity had a political manifestation in that they were aiming at the common folk in a common idiom, with language closer to the rhythms and patterns of colloquial speech.

The effectiveness of oral poetry has origins in tribal ritual and other religious rites. Whether Greek, African, Hebrew, or Christian, the recitation of poetry is an integral part of service or ritual. Even those most leery of poetry may embrace it when they understand that prayers, chants, even war songs and rote learning are part of the living poetic tradition. Such performances of oral poetry show it to exist not as a rarefied art, but as an art central to and expressive of primary human motives.

Poetry in some respects is language turned inward—the writing out of the most private sense of how words approximate feelings. Yet, the poem eventually veers outwards, standing naked as a public document. Actually, as soon as there is any kind of relationship with an audience, the poem is performing its own life. The oral performance only classifies the fundamental character of this most ancient and modern art.

Oral performances are the aggressively democratic side of contemporary poetry, which in the recent past had become esoteric to the extreme with Yeats, Eliot and Pound, and quite difficult for many readers. Contemporary poets who make verbal contact with large audiences free poetry from the traditional, formal contexts of the classroom and the printed page.

The poetry readings of the past two decades have now snowballed into numerous poetry festivals and workshops. One can almost envision poets attracting gatherings of working people as well as students, as Mayakovsky did in Russia, Neruda in Chile, and Guillen in Cuba. It is well known that poetry in the past and in many places in the world today contains elements and ideas that are ideologically explosive. These comprise the subversive character of poetry—the metaphor that strikes close to home, the imaginative power that goes beyond or undermines received notions. Poetry can provide the fresh slant on society, the double or triple perspective offered through its ironies, paradoxes and ambiguities. Poetry out loud, on a large stage, has the potential to activate sensibility and to unify people of widely differing tastes and developments. This is the communicative ideal for all larger and fully integrated readings.

During a panel discussion following a poetry festival at the City College of New York, in Spring, 1974, one member of the audience spoke up about the excitement of listening to poetry readings in Russia during the 1930s. He said he thought the right time had not yet come to us as a society for experiencing this special relationship between poets and audiences, except perhaps for black poets and their audiences. Here the political burden of the poet is most apparent. Nevertheless, the phenomenon of readings shows that all poetry can figure into this social awakening, for the mere fact of poetry's performance has a built-in political corrective.

By the '70s song writers-singers such as Johnny Cash, Bob Dylan and Joni Mitchell were also considered poets, and poetry, though in forms necessarily shaped by the special requirements of the popular song, became visible to a larger audience than even Allen Ginsberg could be responsible for. And this bettered poetry's likelihood of winning a live audience. No doubt the audience that listens doesn't always read poems, but there is the chance that what is alive to the ear will be so on the page. Oral performance may inspire reading poetry, with an ear attuned to the music that is the internal voice of the poem.

II

One way to look at poetry is as a language performance, a dance of words. When people say "that poem works" they probably mean it performs well. As Archibald MacLeish implied years ago, the reading of such a poem feels like something's happened rather than something's "meant." This is the dramatic element that true poetry contains, and that draws an audience of listeners and readers.

I like to regard the poem as a dance of words that play out or extend an action, and it is that performance which counts finally more than what the poem is intellectually presenting. This dance of words cuts across the theme or idea of the poem, and, at best, enlarges or intensifies our experience with the poem, very much as a movement in a dance performance intensifies and gives expression to the idea in the mind of

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the choreographer. Thus, poetry's pleasures are not only in its sober meanings or multiple truths, but in the delight of the sheer movement or functioning of language.

Poetry moves not so much toward a fixed point but within itself from points or perspectives that seem to arrange themselves as if in an improvisation. This movement is the poem's internal performance, the way in which a poem gets to where it ends. The movement on the page, the way lines release other line, the way an emotion or emotions leap along these releases, the way ideas move along stanza breaks and ellipses, is the real performance of poetry. The apparently spontaneous follow-up on some aspect or quality is inherent in the previous line or image.

In a poem about poetry, Robert Duncan says the "design" issues "without a plan,/ complete/ in the all over thing heard;/ a hidden thing/ revealed in its pulse and/ duration;/ a fire." This improvisatory capacity of poetry allows it to function so perfectly in oral performance, as the poet's living voice gives interpretive power to his frequently elusive voice on the page. With the poet's own voice, especially before an audience, we get a dramatization or extension of the dynamics of the poem on the page. The possible ways in which oral performance relates to the internal dynamics are the ultimate coherence between the two distinct yet related ways to view poetry in performance—on the page and on the stage.

III

The Poetry Festivals at New York's City College, which since its inception has been the people's college, are planned to expose poetry as a performing art. These events, which are held annually, may well serve as models or prototypes that exhibit the pleasures and pitfalls of poetry in performance. The intention is to attract a large and diverse audience for poetry and as representative a group of readers as is possible in a whole day devoted to poetry. The readers include elementary school children, winners of a city-wide high school poetry contest, college and graduate students, poets from the staff of the college, and a variety of guest and "featured" poets.

In 1975, the featured poet was to be Allen Ginsberg, but he was ill and could not attend. This was a disappointment for the high school and college students, to whom Ginsberg, possibly more than any other American poet, epitomizes the excitement poetry readings are capable of achieving. Luckily, David Ignatow, a poet of definite wit, music and gentle warmth, agreed to fill the space. Ignatow's poetry is as able to provide surprises as Ginsberg's, but the celebrity's entertainment value, a key element of performance, was missed by many people.

Reading in Domus Angelorum

JOHN FANDEL

It had been so long since I had given a reading, I wondered, when the invitation came, if I still could, feeling, as I hadn't for nearly as long, I'd like to, once more. Not that readings in the past hadn't gone over. From the first, ca. 1950, I'd had a freakish labyrinthine streak of poet's luck—amazing, but not meteoric—and pleasure, reading to four, four hundred, a few more or less . . . not counting the afternoon I read new poems to Marie in an upland meadow.

I had read to fifth-graders and luncheon ladies and embryonic Byrons and pre- & post-Vatican II nuns and Ph.D.'s and alumni and literary societies, *et al.* The spectrum, here and there, at one time or another, may not be Aurora Borealis, if more syllabic than Roy G. Biv. The company I kept was not, however, on a "circuit"—I hear of fellow craftsmen, from time to time, having read on this or that "circuit," as if they were curiously wired or somehow more than just usually connected. I said yes, to myself, I would.

I did not write yes, on the spot. Not for any reason of dickering or playing hard-to-get. The fee was fine. I had frequently read for much less, for ten bucks, for the love of it, for Lapsang Souchong and Oreos—for nothing at all. "Poets of the World, Unite" has never been my motto; I don't support the growing Trade Unions turning poets into petit four winners, or larger egos than most humdrum talents can support. There was a time, I understand, when poets even resorted to having patrons—no petty entrepreneurs declaiming at the whiff of a sandwiched-copper dime. There's a Nursery Rime akin to all this, and a NT parable. I've heard of the fees Big Names get, fees fat enough to choke a horse; to hear them read is to believe they themselves swallow what was intended only for Pegasus.

As it turned out, I read in a former stable, proper stamping ground for Himself. Not a stable, actually, it had been a carriage house, Victorian, refitted by Dominican Sisters into a cameo theatre, a beauty, paneled, the wood mellowed as by eons of dawn. I had read once, as I said, in a meadow; I had also read in a barn, a lounge, an auditorium, a church, a hall, a classroom, a laboratory, a West-Side apartment living room, a Park Avenue den. Never had I read in a simulacrum of paradise. *Where* the poet reads, some believe, does not matter, a coffee house as good as a dell on Parnassus, a dive. Still, there are places that require a resurveying of the concept, Heaven. I'm partial to the empyrean.

Maybe the place made me say . . . but no: I knew what I was going to

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Aside from this disturbing need for a "personality" to act as a drawing card, a festival that hopes to attract many listeners and readers has other interesting sore spots. For example, all poets were requested to limit their readings to ten minutes. At least one poet wondered how he could possibly communicate his poetic range, or even allow the audience to get into his poetry at all, in such a short time. Other poets simply ran over the time limit, causing a back-up of poets later in the afternoon. Most waited their turn to read patiently, and listened attentively to their colleagues, but I was surprised at the large number who didn't wait or listen, and were only eager to do their thing. Students, too, noticed the inconsiderateness of some professional poets, who only listened briefly, marched out in the middle of poems and held conversations with one another, sometimes practically under the very nose of the distracted reader on the podium.

However, the virtues of such an undertaking were also evident. Fourth, fifth and sixth graders were the first readers of the day, and indeed, are among the best readers, for they most easily and naturally carry language to public life. When reading they translate their creations into communication, and in doing so begin to realize how their thought works in public. In their poetry, as in the work of some of the older poets, the genuine voice gives credence to any poetic utterance. If you say it in poetry, it's true, no matter how many laws of logic and plausibility you violate. A fourth grader began a poem conventionally enough:

Bad times
are when you have to
wake up early in the morning for
school;

only to end on the willful exclamation, paradoxical and rich with what can best be called poetic insight:

But good times and bad times
are both wonderful.

As one child commented, "Well, all the poetry was fine but I liked most my friend Nellie. Others were funny too. They have different poetry. Some were fine and silly."

The children set the spirit for poetry to sound and resound in at atmosphere of receptivity, not to poetry's "literary implications," as some students and teachers call it, but to poetry's gracious audacity, the way it can be fine and silly.

Many high school poets and college poets, to say nothing of the pros, already possess a "writing style." The poetry read by the professional poets was as varied as the audience, yet to many this poetry *sounded* alike, except perhaps for the Black poets who sounded different from the whites. This observation reflects the difficulty of evaluating poetry at readings. We all

say before I walked into *Domus Angelorum*—inscribed over the lintel, as nifty a kenning for heaven since English verse was alliterative accentual. Yet I heard myself revising insights arrived at on more native grounds. In a House of Angels, one can hardly be apodictic. How could I say: *Reality, seen, is always better than a poem about reality,* when I had a fleeting realization of what that meant if one were looking on Hell, the real thing, not just Dante's—or only Milton's. So I said, explaining, *sometimes* for *always;* my angelic audience nodded, bright-eyed, wide-awake. (Still, seeing the real *Domus Angelorum* is better than a blueprint poem.) I did say, not a word changed, however: Life is better than an *Odyssey* or a *Paradise Lost* . . . I wish I had ad-libbed "or a *Divine Comedy.*" I meant all the overtones. I also said and meant: Poetry is a way of looking; poems, sometimes, a way of seeing.

"Looking" and "seeing," the images I played on for insights, led into the poems I read, eye poems, in either sense. I worked "looking" through to poetry as the awareness of being looked at, and "seeing," finally, to "reflection" of several kinds. By then, my time was up—it was time to listen to my listeners for a while. A good thing they were few; I could ask them to speak up, question, comment. The silence they had so religiously kept continued. I supposed the evening was over. Then a voice proved there was a night ahead of us. Few, but fit. In responding to their responding, I gave a second reading, as long as the first, and better—my best.

When you listen to your hearers, you begin to catch an echo of what you sounded like to them. What they heard drifts back in their response, their reaction so generous, their friendliness coming through. Before hearing them, you are simply the poet observed, looked at, a voice in a deafening silence, a voice heard by itself selfconsciously wondering how others are hearing it. You wonder how you are going over, until, happily lost in the poetry, you wonder only about the poems, your wonder becoming partly vocal. A noise from a side room distracts you, momentarily, a rattleclick coming from—radiator? window? clock? Angel in the wings? It fades away. The drift of a curtain in the room catches your eye. A window. Your Bull's Eye pocket watch on the lectern ticks suddenly louder. The night is turning colder.

That sound, too, the silent listeners surely have heard, punctuating iambics. And then, half-way through the second reading, sounds over-head. Someone on the roof. Gingerly, then scurrying. Pegasus landing. An advent of Angels. Department Chairman and Dean go out to investigate (I stopped midway through a poem) while the rest of us wait, chatting about spooks, specters, spirits. Local roof-climbing kids shooed away, I finish the poem. It leads to another and one more. They lead to more comments until, certain, I know the time has come for one last poem. The reading has rounded itself out, is over. After all their patience and sensitive reception and response, the listeners applaud *me.*

On the side of the angels, I applaud them.

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have expectations based on physical presence, so that we "hear" women poets, Black poets, working-class poets, poets over a certain age, according to preconceptions that have little to do with the art being performed.

As it is evident that physical presence can alter the reception of poetry, it is also true that poetry readings give the listener a fairly generalized impression of any poem read, especially if the poem is a lengthy one. The pace at which it goes by prevents any close consideration of the actual dynamics of the poem as an integrated, intellectualized structure. The dynamics, or dramatic value of the voice, do the communicating. Reading styles are infectious and, in addition, much of modern poetry tends to be declarative.

There may be another reason, particularly endemic to large poetry readings, that causes poets to sound alike to listeners. The pleasures of a poetry reading are separate from those of reading poetry. The act of reading assists in allowing one to suspend disbelief and acknowledge the world of the poem as the true and operative one. When hearing poetry, on the other hand, one catches at themes and ideas or at least senses a tone that provides a clue to meaning. Thus the reader is often on the alert for something to hold on to, and more often than not it is some issue already publicly exposed.

Obviously, the poet will get across best if he or she hits upon the correct or popular attitude of the moment. Bob Dylan and Allen Ginsberg, our two most listened-to poets, have long been saying what we wanted to hear from the start, not that their stances invalidate their work—though, many poets have admitted that they will read a certain poem they no longer believe in mainly because the response has been so positive. Of course, this is fine, unless it inspires the poet to work only within a range that will prefigure an affirming response.

With poetry performances still existing in a twilight zone between the ritual of poetry and the entertainment of visual as well as oral performance, it is marvelous to see how the reading of poetry can reach people and give them pleasure, and then, maybe, generate a fresh view of poetry on the page. At the deepest level, poetry has the power to release people from themselves and bring them into relationship with other emotional and ideological universes. This is its performance and entertainment value.

BOOKS

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MARY C. HOWELL
Beacon, $8.95

The prodigality of publishers combined with the shrinking of the family may soon bring us to the state where there are more books about the family than there are examples of it. The present panic over the demise of the family has reached hysterical levels from those who wish it would, those who wish it wouldn't, and those who are "value-free" and think it will die anyway. The tone of desperation in many of these recently published books, including some reviewed here, suggests nothing so much as those drowning in the sea of confusion throwing life preservers to those traveling with equanimity on the family boat.

Everyone has had an experience of the family, often a very particular kind of family, long before they have had to think about it: who and what we are is partly explained by living in families; even as we write we may be deeply involved in a family. "Objective" stances vis-à-vis the family may be colored in a way that writing about lasar beams or pigeons are not. In short, distance is hard to attain. Yet attaining it and treating the family as one more sociological, psychological, or economic phenomenon, we may close ourselves off to the sacral character the family has for many people. This universal dilemma is compounded for Americans by political and social attitudes that see the individual as the primary arbiter of values; inevitably these *laissez-faire* attitudes come into conflict with values which support family cohesion and stability. Even conservatives and neo-conservatives who defend The Family are as steeped in individualism as the liberals they charge with encouraging family breakdown. Without a coherent political philosophy concerning the family and without a language expressive of anything but individual rights, we find our society in

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an extremely confused state as to what the family is and what it ought to be doing.

Lacking a social consensus about the family, it is not surprising that these four books give overlapping and contradictory explanations of the nature of the crisis that they all agree the family is passing through. In Shorter, an historical perspective combines psychology and demography to suggest that family forms and behavior are largely molded by larger economic and social necessities. The Ross-Sawhill book suggests that families headed by women will continue to form an ever greater proportion of the total number of families and that low income is the single most important deterrent to successful child-rearing in such a family. The Talbot books represent a collective effort at analyzing current family problems and conclude that failure to consider children first in personal and social planning lies at the heart of these problems. Howell's book sees the family as an autonomous social entity absolutely necessary for human life and capable of renewing itself and reshaping the larger social forces that impinge upon it.

In contrast to the diversity of these outlooks there are some common themes. Part of the crisis has to do with child-rearing capabilities and values: How do we raise children and to what purpose? That theme points to a more fundamental one, the increasingly nonpermanent state of marriage. And as background to both those issues there is the decline of community and the social network that supports family life and child-rearing.

Edward Shorter's history of *The Making of the Modern Family* supports the view that cohesive families depend on cohesive, perhaps even rigid and controlling, communities. The loosening of community bonds leads to the loosening of family ties and a shift beginning in the eighteenth century from what Shorter terms the traditional family to the modern family, to the post-modern family, which by any definition seems to be no family at all.

Shorter argues that these three family types have had a sequential relationship, that is, that they have displaced one another over time. His thesis will hold only if one confounds, as he does, demographic and psychological changes in order to prove that particular psychological attitudes dictate family form. The movement from one to another of these family types embodied changing attitudes toward individual development, community, romantic love, and sexuality, reflected in differing behaviors toward parental authority, community customs, mother-infant relationships, domesticity, and partner selection.

Shorter is right in arguing that behaviors and attitudes shift with economic and social changes but families tend to absorb these shifts without necessarily changing form. Even the most individualistic among us necessarily repress keenly felt desires and the most communal let slide an important and sacred custom. Yet the most important question Shorter raises remains: Is the "post-modern family" a metaphor for the end of the family? "The nuclear family is crumbling—to be replaced . . . by the free-floating couple, a marital dyad subject to dramatic fissions and fusions, and without the orbiting satellites of pre-pubertal children, close friends, or neighbors. . . ." Such post-modern dyads exist, of course; we read about them in popular sociology all the time. But will they replace the "nuclear family" which still in some places and at some moments displays "traditional family habits"? Or is the "post-modern dyad" simply one more family variation to be adopted by certain portions of the population and lived through as a post-adolescent stage?

Finally, the unfortunate limit of Shorter's thesis allows him to explain the causes of emerging forms while ignoring the persistence of "atavistic" ones. For, from an historical perspective, what seems most predictable about the family is not its demise but infinitely greater varieties of its expression. Of course, not everyone is sanguine about all this variety; some regard it as deviant. In fact, the limited tolerance for the choices we have may explain the wringing of hands and gnashing of teeth whenever the subject of the family comes up.

Women's Lib, while stoutly defending itself against charges that it is anti-family, regards many aspects of traditional family behavior as little better than slavery. Dual-career families are frowned upon by many psychiatrists and psychoanalysts since these forms interfere with the child-rearing responsibilities of the mother. Orthodox adherents of most religions regard birth control as a deviance from the primary purposes of sex. And the question of whether or not to have children appears to be about to replace the only recently established—How Many?

Realistic or unrealistic expectations aside, the outcome of child-rearing is a major measure of how families are functioning. *Time of Transition* suggests that other kinds of families, traditionally regarded as unsuccessful in rearing children, may do better than we think.

Isabel Sawhill and Heather Ross, two economists, working from census data, argue that, contrary to the prevailing myth, female-headed families are potentially as successful at rearing children as two-parent famlies. Juvenile delinquency, a traditional measure of child-rearing failure, rather than typically occuring in a mother-headed family, is more likely to occur in conflicted homes with mother and father both present. Without repeating their complex and intricate statistical analysis, let an example suggest the merit of their book: family behavior and child-rearing is exceedingly complex and overall explanations of what leads to success or failure need to be taken apart and reexamined. And reexamination is necessary because over one in ten families with children is now female-headed and our prejudices against such arrangements lead to social policies that exacerbate rather than ease the problems of such families.

Partially a criticism of the ways in which welfare policies and unequal wages damage rather than help families, *Time of Transition* also examines other issues involved in family instab-

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bility and female-headedness among all classes. One of the book's more controversial hypotheses is that, as new job and educational opportunities become available to women, more marriages are likely to end in separation and divorce. Greater economic independence among married women means less financial dependence on husbands; the quality of the personal relationship, good or bad, is thus more likely to affect marital stability than economic need. The divorcee in such circumstances is also likely to remarry. This scenario is modified in black families where unemployment places black men at a disadvantage in beginning or maintaining families. Black women who tend to be better educated and have higher-paying jobs than black men can often maintain a family without the support of a husband.

The objective and analytic way in which Ross and Sawhill approach their subject is both refreshing and dismaying. Refreshing because all of these matters need to be analyzed in order to illuminate the different ways different kinds of families cope with varying economic and social conditions. Dismaying because what appears to be "value-free" is loaded with biases that go unstated and unexamined. It is one thing to argue that social policy ought to be modified so as not to penalize female-headed families, and that women should secure a good education and calculate their money-making potential before marriage; it is another to imply that if poverty disappeared as a correlative of female-headed families, it would not make much difference if families only had one parent. It may be that the "free-floating couple," Shorter talks about will prove to be mother and child rather than man and woman. Such an outcome seems dismal, since children need more caring adults, not fewer; men and women raising children need more emotional, intellectual, and financial support, not less.

The Ross and Sawhill vision conjures up an image of the family as a nonprofit, philanthropic organization providing individualized social services. Such an image ignores the inherent contradiction in seeing the family as a group and in seeing it as a collection of individuals living together for the sake of convenience. We are not collections of independent, free agents hanging out together in families. We live in families, willingly or unwillingly, because for most of our childhood and for a good part of our adulthood we need a group either as a support or as a medium for our generative and creative inclinations. We are social animals and who and what we are comes from the biological, social, economic, and psychological ties we have to others. In these days of unbridled solipsism few dare to say "permanent ties to others," perhaps only because they feel overwhelmed by the statistical evidence of impermanance: the high divorce rate and the abandonment of children by one or both divorcing parents. But what people actually do may not be what they ought to do even if their minimum moral quest is self-fulfillment. After all, how is anyone to know whether she or he is *truly* self-fulfilled without applause from a warm and loving group, unless it be the sound of one hand clapping that would convince them?

It is these broader questions of social cohesion and social responsibility that are taken up in *Raising Children in Modern America* and *Helping Ourselves*. The first book contains two volumes, one a collection of essays presented before the Harvard Interfaculty Seminar on Children, the other a summary by Nathan B. Talbot of the discussion, opinions, and recommendations flowing from that seminar.

The collection of essays represents the work of many of the best thinkers and doers in children's policy: Jerome Kagan, Lawrence Kohlberg, Urie Bronfenbrenner, Marian Wright Edelman, among others. One essay in the first volume illustrates nicely the value and drawback of the books and perhaps of the whole project. Bernard Berelson's essay "The Value of Children: a Taxonomical Essay" is both intriguing and excessively cerebral and professorial. In speculating about the many reasons people want to have children, Berelson hesitantly advances the notion of a parental instinct. He offers as a piece of experimental evidence the attraction by both humans and animals to the quality of babyishness in infants—attraction "verified in studies of the changing size of eye pupils" when adults are shown pictures of progressively more babyish human and animal faces. Berelson speculates that this babyishness and its attractiveness to adults may be extremely important in motivating the care and rearing of the young in all species. When social scientists and humanists, in general, are throwing up their hands about nurtruing behavior, Berelson reminds us that not all human behavior rests on conscious regard for social custom and practices, that there may be forms of behavior which incline us to respond to and nurture the young even if it is not socially fashionable or economically viable. His intriguing speculation aside, Berelson's essay points up the telling flaw in both volumes.

Our society's problems in child-rearing and family life can be categorized, analyzed, and criticized in a rationalistic framework; moral urgings to improve our attitudes and policies can inspire us. Yet I do not see how these problems can be resolved by rational analysis or moral urgings.

Rational planning, systematization, and screening, are potentially useful but limited ways to organize anything, including children and families. As one of the last places where non-rational life flourishes the family has its drawbacks as an arena where rational planning is the organizing principle. Perhaps children should enjoy a greater percentage of national resources and perhaps the rights and wishes of adults ought to be relative to children's welfare, as the group recommends.

But what does that mean? One is tempted to dismiss their conclusions as an absent-minded and sentimental Rousseauian peroration. But that's unfair, for like all of us, they have a language problem in speaking of the family. When we speak of the family as if it were a collection of individuals instead of a group, we use the language

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of rights and we speak as if family members have legal claims against one another. That notion strikes at the heart of the absolutely primary resource for a family's well-being, namely a group in which loving and caring adults do weigh choices, establish priorities, and make decisions for all members of the family—and where sometimes a child's welfare is secondary.

What needs rational planning is not parents and families but the policies and institutions which affect the cohesion and child-rearing capabilities of families, many of which are neither benevolent or supportive. Most schools, most child welfare agencies, foster-care agencies and adoption agencies maximize benefits to those who run and staff them usually to the detriment of the children and families that they were created to serve. Now Talbot and his colleagues well know this—in fact, Marian Edelman in her work with the Children's Defense Fund has been one of the people who has most consistently and dramatically pointed this out. Recommendations that urge the creation of yet another benevolent, supportive screening program suggest that despite keen analysis and weighty discussions, the Harvard Inter-faculty Committee does not have any answers for us and probably for themselves, since it is unlikely that they would submit themselves or their children to such a program unless it was run by Jerome Kagan. In fact, they have been driven back to the old progressive notion that control of the family from outside can adequately substitute for care and concern within.

Mary Howell in *Helping Ourselves* precisely addresses this problem. Given the fact that institutions and professionals meant to support families and children perform as inadequately as they do and given the fact that most families cannot raise children single-handedly, exactly how can anyone hope to make families work in this society?

As a pediatrician, child develpmentalist, mother, wife etc. Howell knows both sides of the coin. Caring institutions and helping professions manipulate people, often undermining any but the strongest families' sense of competence and confidence. Families often don't want to have choices, make decisions, assume responsibilities; too often they are willing to put their lives in the hands of people who, after all, have only a professional responsibility for the outcome. Beginning with how people in families need to communicate with one another, Howell goes on to suggest how they ought to deal with and communicate with the world outside. And her essential proposition is an old one: basic trust and caring. "Our families are now in peril, and the most likely source of real help seems to lie in the magic of caring, to be discovered within ourselves and all those we learn to trust."

If Howell's prescription seems a bit naive to hard-nosed realists, it nonetheless has the merit of pointing to where the real responsibility must ultimately rest—with those who choose to live in families. In those centuries which Shorter describes, everyone lived in families because there was no choice. Now given choice about marriage, about child-rearing, about loyalty to communities, those who live in families have an arena for working out an alternative to individualism—an alternative which given time may again seem viable.

Notes for the Two-Dollar Window

LEONARD KRIEGEL

Saturday Review Press, $8.95

JOHN DRUSKA

Little Sammy leads off the strongest part of Leonard Kriegel's *Notes for the Two-Dollar Window*, "Going Home: II," the second of three farragos of neighborhood people and scenes, each of which precedes a longer character portrait. A mite too short for the Army, later forced from his flight mechanic's job by returning servicemen, plump Sammy assumes a position as "Mayor of the Corner" on 213th St. and Jones Avenue in the Bronx. Punctual and meticulous, Sammy presides daily beside the newspaper stand, near the bus and subway stops outside the candy store; he carves wood expertly, eyes passersby, and listens. At home he lives with his mother, carefully storing his tools in a work-room sanctuary, once the site of his flourishing radio-TV repair business. "Apparently indifferent to money," Sammy quit repairing full-time: "He wanted no claims made on him." As a favor he still fixes sets for his friends. When Kriegel last sees him, Sammy, thinned by a diet, is mourning the passage of the neighborhood boys: " 'You moved. Your cousin Leo. Big Boy. Everybody . . . None of you were satisfied here.' " A younger Kriegel warns Sammy that he'll get lost if he stays on the corner, and comments: "He is going to be forty soon and to call upon memory by the time one is forty is to be made aware of how much has been left to the whims of fate." A month later Sammy destroys the master antenna atop a new apartment building, and jumps off its roof. "Time robbed him of his function." Near the end of his book Kriegel, forty himself, touches his own fate and connects it with Sammy's nostalgia: "Even now, a forty-year-old crippled academic with two young sons of his own, I want to run with them, stride for stride, to prove my endurance as they will be forced to prove theirs. For me, too, there is no salvation outside of memory."

Those of us who, like Kriegel, have grown up in the ethnic neighborhoods of large cities, have aged in our memories, I think, more quickly than others. Change has forced us. We reflect in order to connect with the characters of our past, like Little Sammy and the others in *Notes*' "Going Home" sections, whose presence helped create for us a particular place in time we loved.

If Kriegel's *Notes* did no more than sketch the geography of his old neighborhood in the Bronx, I'd still read it with a reflex of affection. I'm with him when he talks of the candy store anchoring his world, of games in the streets and vacant lots, the characters on the Parkway, severe childhood ill-

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ness, and that leafy, often feverish, pressure of once-immigrant families trying to cultivate their rituals with their children, on a hothouse scale, in a dream of permanence, while the New World gives in to mindless sprawl. I'm with his Jews, Italians and Irish in the Bronx, and I'm replaced on the west side of Chicago, in that wedge of land between the El tracks and the sanitary canal that by midcentury looked like a patchwork garden, each people in a plot defined by churches, streets and railroad tracks: German, Italian, Lithuanian, Polish, Slovak, Bohemian. They called the vacant lots "prairies."

A quarter-century later our old neighborhoods appear to wither, and *Notes* does do more than sketch the geography of the past. By putting us in touch with the lives of Sammy, Lennie Kriegel, Hardass and the rest of their friends, *Notes* suggests what doomed these neighborhoods from the start, while it shows Kriegel reacting to his neighborhood's death with a most credible emotion, a kind of perceptive bafflement. It had to happen, but the happening hurts.

> *. . .'There've been other short guys. You come right down to it, he didn't have any balls.'*
>
> *I do not answer. Jones Avenue is part of America, like those silent towns that dot the landscape, candy buttons on white paper sheets. A 'height problem.' So he took his leave . . .*
>
> *I think of the airplane models he carved for me when I was in the hospital. Not a rare talent, but one that had to be learned. Patience, resourcefulness, craftsmanship . . . That same meticulous sense of craft, that same slide-rule mentality that had made Sammy a careful worker had made him an artist, too . . . He should have been a socialist crank, a vegetarian pacifist, but he was too American for that. Even when he tried to organize the flight mechanics at La Guardia, Sammy never doubted the American way. And what had it left him?*
>
> —Notes for the Two-Dollar Window

Kriegel's impression of the neighborhood in its heyday, "the virus of penny-ante gamblers" rampant, and his notes on its aging reveal how the push to *make it* as an American undermines the neighborhood's tribal values, and insures its death. America, that ultimate bookie, lets her folk gamble for a fortune, but like any smart operator takes much more than she gives. Success and failure stratify men and women in America's terms, and banish collective dreaming along with its ceremonies.

Some neighborhood fixtures, like Uncle Morris the furrier and would-be socialist, earn success of a sort: weekends off and in time a black, chrome-holed 1948 Buick that points the way out of the neighborhood. "There was money on Jones Avenue in the fifties, a sense of possibility in the air, teasing our imaginations. . . . The cars widened our territory, denied our singularity." Kriegel's grandmother disdains the auto; her powers aren't mechanical, nor in America are they saleable.

Others, piece-workers or waitresses or whatever, not as quick to snatch or not as lucky, work in harness and endure in place—Kriegel's parents cooped up without a bedroom. Skill is fragmented, self hammered to fit the open shapes. Minor craftsmen, all-American but innocent like Little Sammy, live until they warp and vanish, and leave little behind.

For the younger, success on America's grand scale so often means dispersal. Education or the big break as a dream car. While patent failures of all ages rust out in the neighborhood, wearing hard-guy façades, bearing memories of thwarted passion, left with the misconnection or disconnection their lives tail into: Spaldeen sucking "angel dust" on a vacated subway train.

Kriegel's three "Going Home" chapters nicely detail, in short anecdotes, his Bronx experience at home and on the street; and their cumulative force makes us feel the ironies of growing older in America's cities during the postwar era. Kriegel moves nimbly, with good range, from his early childhood to accounts of those adrift, cut off from their childhoods, the neighborhood, themselves. At one extreme, the warm memory of young Lennie cuddling in his matriarch-grandmother's seal coat: "Sometimes, I would fall asleep that way, to find her looking at me when I awoke. She was conscious of the fur's power—*her* power—to transform." Even as she once calmed a mad dog by addressing him in Yiddish. At the other extreme, Kriegel's story of Gunner Kopit, ex-boxer, one-time Great Jewish Hope, who enjoys a brief renascence as savior of a youth center, but gets too far in hock with the bookies to stick around. He "slips off the landscape. . . . On occasion, cards arrive bearing strange postmarks. He is, as he scrawls on the back of a picture postcard showing Ring Lardner's house in Niles, Michigan, 'seeing America.' "

Of the longer, first-person self-portraits in *Notes*, "Audrey" is the most convincing. Her changes—from Catholic girlhood through sexual initiation, an idyllic romance with a college boy, his rejection, profligacy and an accidental baby, to an affair with her best friend's husband and her own move away from him—shape a natural story, supported by a finely-drawn cast. The Irish collegian backing off from sex after indulging, Audrey's bloated friend Jeanette wasting into a morbid middle age, Audrey's mother pulling out of *her* marriage to dye her hair red, diet, and take on a "rich Greek boyfriend" —through Audrey's voice Kriegel plays them off well against Audrey and her final recognition. Still a waitress at 39, holed up in the Village with a 29-year-old actor-lover, Audrey ends her narration: "When you come right down to it, though, I guess it doesn't matter who's in that bed. What's he doing there anyhow? Just waiting. Like me. Serving his time." Audrey's history, with its bedrock of frustration, embodies the rhythms and themes Kriegel

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sounds on the larger scale of the neighborhood. While "Audrey" is one of his "Portraits from an American Neighborhood" (*Notes*' subtitle), Audrey's life *is* the life of the whole neighborhood, serving time, awaiting its next lukewarm lover, even as Little Sammy's life and death are in another way the neighborhood's too.

Neither "Dominic" nor "Lennie," the other longer pieces, create as surely that sense of live connection with Kriegel's neighborhood; neither is as controlled as "Audrey." Dominic's voice sounds at times too self-consciously thoughtful, a melodramatic street-kid with good heart trying to make sense; at other times too much like Professor Kriegel's: talk of "demons" and "symmetry" and statements like "Cage the reason why." I guess if we accept Dominic's experience—boozehound father, abortion-queen mother who gets busted, school dropout, Marines, screwing and psychoanalysis, briefly happy marriage, barroom work and marital breakup, years of college courses—we ought to be able to hear him in the veering diction. But I had trouble with the section, and had little idea of Dominic as a character until the later "Going Home: II" and "Lennie," where Kriegel draws on his 32-year friendship with Dominic. Then, looking back, "Dominic" sounded more plausible, but still read as if Kriegel were skimming experience instead of letting his character enter it. In "Lennie," also, I missed a fullness in Kriegel's portrayal of himself. The chapter reads like a pastiche of incidents that bring his memory up against the neighborhood-present, threaded with excerpts from his mother's record of the passage to America. Almost a spillover from "Going Home: III."

I think Kriegel could have tightened *Notes* by combining "Lennie" with "Dominic," since Kriegel as "Lennie" comes alive throughout the "Going Home" sections. "Dominic" and "Audrey," framed by "Going Home(s), would connect as naturally as ever, though now we don't see their special oblique connection until "Lennie." Dominic concludes near the end of "Lennie," on the last page of *Notes*: "'I'd do anything for a start in something. I'm forty-three. You know, once I was close to fucking Audrey's mother. Took me a long time to understand, I should've fucked Audrey instead. By the time you learn these things, it's too late. Too late.'"

Leonard Kriegel's Notes for the Two-Dollar Window, as strong up the middle as a good baseball team, is eloquent in localizing this truth: time's about up for the neighborhoods too. Their ruin hasn't been Black or Latino invasion; these peoples, as well, have been victimized in turn, and will be again, by that old thief America. No, beneath all the rhetoric spawned by America's penchant for mobility ("movements," "changing neighborhoods"), a fatal irony spreads. America, whose first Europeans so mistrusted the wilderness that they set out to garden the nation, has so mobilized her people in pursuit of the buck that the plots and rows of her past are being trampled. Under a forest of TV antennas, where the quilt-gardens of neighborhoods once grew, cities wither in a new American wilderness.

Should Anyone Say Forever?

JOHN C. HAUGHEY, S.J.

Doubleday, $6.95

To Be a Priest

EDITED BY
ROBERT E. TERWILLIGER &
URBAN T. HOLMES

Seabury, $3.95

GERARD S. SLOYAN

The first of these books is concerned chiefly with the commitment of the married to one another and of people of both sexes in religious congregations to each other. Ministry, presumably presbyteral, is considered a "state" of life in which a permanent commitment is also made (although to whom is not said. It is not further attended to. Conversely, priestly service in the church—episcopal and presbyteral, with the assistance of deacons and others—is the subject of the twenty essays in the second book. These writers do not advert to the marriage and family life of priests except to record that in Eastern orthodoxy a priest who marries a second time must forego exercise of his sacramental office, while priests of the largest rite of the Roman church need to ask to cease exercising their ministry in order to marry validly. Unlike the first book, *To Be a Priest* does not concern itself with the priests of the Anglican, Roman, and Orthodox churches whose ministry is exercised as members of religious orders and congregations.

The Terwilliger and Holmes book carries a foreword by John Maury Allin, the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, which indicates that it is the first collection of a projeected mosaic of studies. He writes that he proposed such a plan to the House of Bishops of his church at the end of its General Convention at Louisville in 1973. The bishop's supposition was that discussions of priesthood and sexuality among church people would result in some good published resources to deal with the question of the ordination of women to the priesthood in that church. In fact, the book does not address itself to the question extensively. The editors in their essays and twelve other contributors abstain from any view, three say that there is nothing against it, and one argues that the office of oversight (*episkope*) by women is not the ministry of women that the church needs. One essayist argues for it as a necessary corollary of Galatians 3:27-28 (Guthrie), which contains Paul's statement that in Christ sex no longer matters. The sole woman in the book (Thompsett) writes about clergy education in Tudor England and is alone in underscoring the Protestant character of the Church of England as its modern origin.

The Orthodox contributor (Hopko) writes a tightly-packed theological essay worthy of study. In it, patristic typologies of Eve and Mary are put forward to establish the rightness of a partner for Adam as the priest of

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creation and the fittingness of Mary as the image and personifier of the church, the renewed creation. Nothing is said of male ministry in a community conceived as the bride of Christ. We are left to draw our own conclusions. In the same way, it has earlier been said in this essay that Christ and the Spirit are typified by Adam and Eve. The two divine persons eternally begotten of the one Father can no more do without each other than can the primordial pair.

A theological essay from the host communion that is especially worthy of attention is that of Bishop Arthur Vogel, who "personally believes that the change [ordaining women as presbyters] can be made." He considers canonical regularity to be not a legal nicety but a fact that conveys an essential truth in the present controversy. "Only the Church as an ecclesial community, by means of its own communal processes, can determine and recognize who will be its servants."

> *Although it is probably reasonable to suppose that when an apostle was present at such a gathering he would have presided and thus, in all likelihood, offered the eucharistic blessing over the bread and wine, it is nevertheless evident that given the itinerant lives of the apostles, many eucharistic gatherings took place at which no apostle was present. The New Testament evidence simply does not support the imposition of a fully developed system of "cultic delegation"—that is foreign to the very climate of the texts. In the absence of an apostle, perhaps the most likely person to have presided at the Eucharist would have been the host in whose home the faithful had gathered.*
>
> —Louis Weil in "Priesthood in the New Testament"

The perspectives on ordination in this book are rich, those on vocation less so. There are splendid historical pieces from the pens of Bourke and Shepherd, respectively on the priesthood of Christ in Hebrews and on prebyters in the early church. Shepherd produces all the evidence that exists to say that only toward the middle of the third century are there precise indications of priestly office committed to presbyters. Until then their function had been one of counsel to a priestly *episkopos*.

The treatment of the requirement for those in a priestly order, episcopate or presbyterate, can only be called high-minded. It is also largely without a sociological or economic dimension. So much is priesthood a matter of God and church in these essays that human readiness for its tasks are explicitly downplayed. Most of the writers insist that this calling is not a profession, a career, or an occupation. In doing so they seem to rob it of any realistic working vocabulary.

The book is altogether helpful both in what it says and what it does not say. One theological piece entitled, "What Is a Priest? A Roman Catholic Catechism," serves as a machete to help one cut one's way through the tangled thicket of discussions in the church of the author (Quesnell), or indeed anyone represented in the book.

John Haughey's *Should Anyone Say Forever?* puts some questions to a nation that recorded 980,000 divorces in 1974 and saw 30,000 Catholic women resign from their religious congregations in a recent ten-year period (no figures are supplied on men). The author suspects that the figures say something about fidelity or the lack of it, and so argues. Since Haughey is concerned with two social situations in which the reviewer has never had a part, his first instinct is to abstain from a view and leave judgment to those who are implicated. The principles the author selects governing human love and community seem the right ones and his nuances ample. It is only when he seems to shy away from the implications of his principles that one grows uneasy.

The assumption of the book, that in making perpetual vows of poverty,

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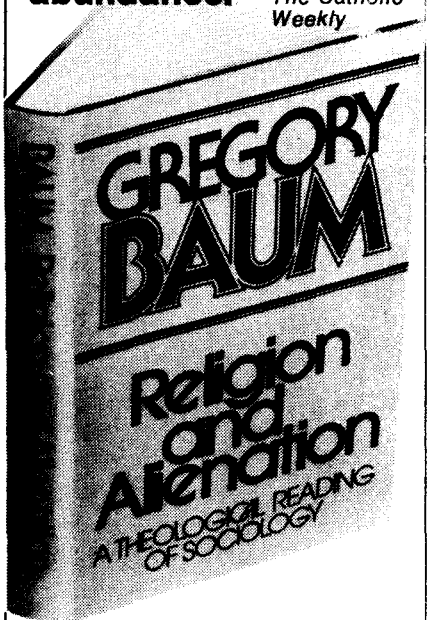

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chastity, and obedience one has committed oneself in personal love forever to the members of one's monastery or institute, after the model of marriage, may come as news to some in this state. The emphasis is so new, in fact—and so non-explicit canonically—that many have probably resigned precisely because confronted with it. If the initial choice was to serve God through the love of specific persons, fidelity might be better assured (some have concluded) through the choice of other persons. There is wisdom quoted from Sartre, Marcel and others, to which the author adds his own. He is less at ease, or so it seems to this student of the Bible, in discussing the fidelity of Israel's God to Jesus and his God, and the religious commitments of Mary and Paul. The Haughey volume has its merits but they are of a different order than the best in Terwilliger and Holmes.

The China Hands: America's Foreign Service Officers And What Befell Them

E. J. KAHN, JR.

Viking, $12.95

NICHOLAS R. CLIFFORD

Mr. Kahn's book recalls the whole sorry debate of some twenty-five years ago over the question of responsibility for the "loss" of China to the Communists. His heroes are the China specialists of the State Department—John Carter Vincent, John S. Service, John P. Davies, O. Edmund Clubb, and others—all of whom reported from and about that country during the war years, and most of whom had their careers destroyed by the Know-nothing wolfpack who ran with Joseph McCarthy and his henchpersons in the early 'fifties. The China Hands reported home certain uncomfortable facts dealing in particular with the loss of support for Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang, and the growth in strength of the Communists, and by an illogical process they were later accused of thus having foisted a pro-Communist policy on the United States. One would hope that they would no longer need vindication, but in 1970 the Government printed two massive volumes of documents, under the auspices of the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee, for which Dr. Anthony J. Kubek provided a 113-page introduction raising all the old charges again. Service has answered Kubek's attack, and two of the others—Clubb and Col. David Barrett (a military China Hand) have told their sides of the story. But their books were published by university presses; they are works which do not have a wide circulation, and unlike Kubek's "history," are not underwritten by the American taxpayer.

Kahn's work is welcome then, as a book aimed at a wider audience. He pulls together the careers of these men, who were, as he points out, an unlikely group to be labeled as traitors. By and large they were solid middle Americans by background and upbringing; there were no Jews, no ethnics of dubious loyalty, and not one of them was educated by the Big Red Machine of Harvard. Some were born and raised in China, speaking the language from childhood, and others had to undertake later in life the daily struggle that learning Chinese involves. All of them served years in China and East Asia, and came to know the country and its people well. During the war they tried to convince their superiors that there was enormous danger of a civil war in China, that Chiang was losing the backing of all but the most reactionary elements, and that unconditional support for his regime would only hurt American policy. They were, in short, reporting the truth as they saw it, in order to help formulate those policies which would best further the interests of their country. Not only was their conduct the opposite of treasonable, but their reporting was of a very high quality indeed.

Kahn sets this down in a book which is chatty, gossipy, full of amusing anecdotes (part of it appeared in the *New Yorker*) and adventure stories as well, as the Hands fought for survival in wartime China and postwar Washington. So far, so good. Unfortunately it must be said that the book seldom rises above this level. Nowhere is there any analysis of the complicated political background, both Chinese and American, against which the story is played out. The judgments on Chiang Kai-shek are facile; we are told, on p. 77, that his chief interest was in making China secure for himself, and on p. 126 that his primary objection to having Stilwell given unrestricted command of all Chinese troops *in China* (Roosevelt's wish) stemmed from his fear that "his very title of 'Generalissimo' hung in the balance." Very little is said of the changes which war brought to China, or the way in which, by driving Chiang's regime from the modern cities of the east coast to the backwards hinterland of Szechwan, the war deprived the KMT of what progressive elements it had earlier had. Nor is there a word on the absurdity of Roosevelt's proposal that we take over the armed forces of an allied power on that power's soil.

As it happened, Roosevelt changed his mind almost immediately and recalled Stilwell at Chiang's request; shortly thereafter, in a disastrous move, he sent out Patrick Hurley as ambassador to Chungking, despite Hurley's total lack of qualifications for the job. Here too, some background would be helpful to explain these glaring inconsistencies. In truth it would seem that Roosevelt neither knew nor cared much about China; furthermore, by 1944 it was evident that the war would be won in the Pacific Ocean rather than on the mainland, and China no longer played an important role in our strategic thinking.

So too, it would help to have some information on American attitudes towards, and knowledge about, Chinese Communism, and an analysis of the reports which Davies, Service, Clubb and others were sending to Washington. How much did these men know of Communist politics and policies? Of the changes which war had brought to the Party? how many had read, for instance, Mao's *On New Democracy*

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(1940), an enormously important work? How far were they aware of the *cheng-feng* (rectification) campaign of 1942 and 1943, which did much to tighten Party discipline? How far were they aware of the differences between the American usage of the word "democracy," with its libertarian overtones, and the Chinese usage, which emphasizes popular support (*min-chu chu-i*, "people's rule-ism")? Questions like these come to mind, but they have no answers here. They have been dealt with by others, such as Kenneth Shewmaker and Tang Tsou, but unfortunately their books too come from the university presses.

The destruction of the careers and reputations of the China Hands, which Kahn chronicles in the last—and best—third of his book, deprived this country of the services of one of the most intelligent and perceptive groups of foreigners who ever sought to explain China to the West. It may also, as Kahn suggests, have encouraged later F.S.O.'s to report, not the truth, but the views which their superiors wished to hear; how far was our Indochinese adventure an outgrowth of these years? It would seem, however, to be wishful thinking to suggest as Kahn (quoting Service) does, that had we been more cooperative towards Mao earlier, Sino-American relations would not have been the sterile wasteland they have become since 1949. Perhaps this is so. But to suggest that a friendlier American attitude towards the Communists would have made much difference is to fall victim to the old American illusion that we could make China over in our image. One of the lessons we've had to learn since 1945 is precisely that we do not have the power to determine the policies of other nations. When Chairman Mao announced in October 1949 that the Chinese people had stood up, he meant that China, so long the object of the policies of others, had now become a subject. We should take him at his word, and realize that China, as well as the United States, must bear at least some of the responsibilities for the wretched state of relalations between our countries, just as we realize that the betterment of those relations in recent years has come when China, as well as we, have been willing to compromise.

Beethoven: A Documentary History

H. C. ROBBINS LANDON, EDIT.

Macmillan, $11.95

The Interior Beethoven: A Biography of the Music

IRVING KOLODIN

Knopf, $15

CHILTON WILLIAMSON, JR.

I am no musicologist and hence unfamiliar with much of the body of Beethoven literature extant, but it must be of sufficiently elephantine proportions that to publish yet another book on the subject of the great man is as much to engage in brinkmanship with the supererogatory as it would be to write a tome on Abe Lincoln, sex or dieting. Yet brinkmanship—as the Western world never properly learned, alas, during the 1950s—is a form of courage frequently rewarded. Each of these new titles represents, to my knowledge, a valuable addition to whole warehousesful of accredited scholarly Beethoveniana.

Most documentary studies of anything are generally carted away unread to the second-hand bookshops, but in *Beethoven* Mr. Landon has produced a useful and pleasant book. After getting off to an unfortunate start with a chapter on the portraiture of the *Maestro* that is no worse—and no better—than most of the stuff that is regularly ground out, by automatons out of card files, in art history departments, Landon proceeds to compile a most vivid account of Beethoven's life, pieced together from the letters of friends, patrons, colleagues, pupils and hangers-on of the composer; from reviews of Beethoven's keyboard performances and of performances of his compositions; from Beethoven's own notebooks; from

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people who met the man but once or twice and wrote down their impressions of him; from Beethoven's several *inamoratas*; and from numerous other sources. Beethoven himself was not, like Berlioz or Verdi, a cogent prose stylist—he wrote pretty much as he conducted: arratically and with great swoopings of emotion that left good form bulging out all over like a collapsed circus tent—but not even his ineptness with words concealed or even clouded the roaring personality that found expression mainly, yet then so completely, in music. Happily, Landon lets him roar throughout.

As for Mr. Kolodin's new book, it rests upon the thoroughness of scholarship that underlies all of his work. His intention—forwarded by extensive forays into many of the sources that Landon draws upon—was to perform "an inquiry . . . into musical botany, tonal horticulture, and aesthetic cross-breeding." Kolodin, that is, set out to trace the inception of Beethoven's musical ideas and to chart their course into, through and out of the vocabulary of his composition. This course he follows as Beethoven's scores and notebooks show the way. "Beethoven," he argues, "had an obsession with realizing his unfulfilled conceptions." Thus the "germ-cell"—of the C-minor (#5) Symphony composed in 1803 first made its appearance in a work by Beethoven—the C-minor Piano Sonata (Opus 10, No. 1)—written at least six years earlier: "five statements of the seemingly insignificant phrase and, in the space of two and a fraction measures, it has come and gone. Nor does it reappear in the remaining seventy measures of the moment. But it is 'gone' only from the forefront of the creator's mind." By reference to many similar examples, Kolodin shows how musical ideas were patiently worked out—certainly not divinely received—by Beethoven; how they were drawn into the very center of his consciousness and then, when they had been fully developed, fully realized, were dropped by the composer for good, though they often produced, "through some form of parthenogenesis . . . another idea altogether." As Beethoven's stock of musical ideas began to grow formidable, he stuffed them, these "building blocks of a scheme he would eventually find time to realize," into his notebooks: by the summer of 1803, when he wrote the "Eroica," Beethoven had "set so many different forces in motion, fertilized and cross-fertilized so many different strains of musical growths, that the harvest would be many years in the reaping." By following the progress of those forces, Kolodin has been able to perceive the successive movements that make up Beethoven's *oeuvre*. He concludes, for example, "from a collation of all the available evidence . . . that everything Beethoven did between 1803 and 1810 was part of a continuous, cyclical turmoil of creation"; and that the two major impulses that relate such cycles are "intentional, volitional re-use of material he had invented and used previously; and unintentional, nonvolitional extension and expansion of ideas which continued to mature and grow within him until they achieved maximum fulfillment."

If Kolodin is masterful in pursuing his researches into Beethoven's musical development, he is also clever in explaining the relationship between the composer's interior and his exterior life. Beethoven was as a child the victim and beneficiary of his father's ambition to produce a prodigy on the order of Mozart: to this end he was kept hard at practice at the keyboard and discouraged from composition "But isn't that beautiful?"—"That is another matter. You are not ready to play things out of your own head"). Consequently it was not, according to Mr. Kolodin, until 1800, when Beethoven was thirty, that his instincts as a composer overcame the instincts of a pianist who composed to a large degree for his own performance, and that his development as a composer was at last unhampered by the restrictions that the latter had imposed. Kolodin is clever too at pinpointing, both through Beethoven's music and the known facts of his life, the year in which Beethoven first became aware of his deafness, the great tragedy of his life and career, and he is excellent at detailing Beethoven's skillful handling—something of which Mozart for one was tragically incapable—of his noble Viennese patrons. (In *The Interior Beethoven*, as in his history of the Metropolitan Opera, Kolodin exhibits a certain animus against the well-born and the well-heeled: a disdain that seems, as the book proceeds, to parallel Beethoven's own resentment, though it rarely equals it.)

For, as both Landon's and Kolodin's books make appropriately clear, Beethoven—as a man and as an artist—was a rebel, if not a revolutionary. A die-hard individualist and nonconformist, he shook music loose from the cool abstractness of the saloon—although when Kolodin writes that Beethoven "made music speak not only to men but to man"; that he "liberated it from servitude to caste or class, the church or the court"; that he made it "an instigator of social purpose and ethical action," I think of certain eighteenth-century composers and their intelligent patrons and begin to look about for a Scarlet Pimpernel. Nevertheless, whatever terms you employ, it's hard to overestimate the man who once wrote of himself: "Beethoven can compose, God be thanked—though he can do nothing else in this world."

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REVIEWERS

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CORRESPONDENCE

(*Continued from page 515*)

lieve that many pro-life voters turned to Reagan instead of giving a "thrown away" vote to McCormack. Can this have been a substantial factor in transforming Reagan's early poor showing against Ford into a real challenge now to Ford?

Third, at the Democratic Convention, whoever places Ellen McCormack's name in nomination, will have the opportunity to present the so-called one issue of pro-life to a huge national audience.

This "one-issue" is making a politically credible beginning. It is interesting to recall that the one-issue of Anti-Slavery first got off the ground politically when the new Free-Soil Party in the 1848 election garnered a mere 275,000 votes. In 1852 they drew even less; but in 1860, now relabeled as the Republican party, they swept Lincoln into power, and the one-issue of anti-slavery close to its final victory.

(REV.) CHARLES D. GORMAN

Steinfels (Cont.)

Winthrop declared, with a special mission under God? In responding to the immediate problems of the next years, a President Carter will be providing answers, perhaps even definitive ones, to those questions.

Circumstances will force this role upon him. But the American people appear to be forcing it as well. The President has always been a spiritual leader, but Carter, sent by the Lord, as Martin Luther King, Sr. declared him in the moving conclusion of the New York convention, seems especially chosen—and especially willing—to play the part. This is Carter the lay preacher, who talks of goodness, God, and love; this is the one of the four Carters who has attracted the most attention. The others are well known types to our cosmopolitantly provincial analysts; but here is the "bird of strange and exotic plumage," Rovere described. The reaction has been one of puzzlement and suspicion on the part of many—fear of the unknown—at the same time as it has been one of recognition and hope on the part of others. They feel that the tradition of Winthrop passed down not to the New England mind of the Concord sages and later elites, but through the frontier evangelical creeds to such as the Kings, father and son. And possibly to the likely next President.

It is at this point that the problem of the four Carters becomes acute. Luck may hold and the times may be easy; but apply Murphy's law instead—whatever can go wrong, will—and imagine the kind of "crises" a President Carter may confront: the inflation-unemployment trade-off proves intractable; the prospect of default again looms for major cities and states; the world economy deteriorates further; the Middle East demands a new commitment overseas. His choices will be (1) to do nothing, (2) to move leftward beyond the conventional liberalism of his current advisors; (3) to move rightward toward the activist conversatism of the corporative elite. The first of these choices will cut against his own temperament and his shrewd understanding of the national character. The second alternative, with its emphasis on greater equality and wider participation, will appeal to both Carter the preacher and Carter the activist. But the third possibility, with its promise of efficiency and stability, may well appeal to Carter the modernizer and Carter the businessman as well as to Carter the activist. What then will become of Carter the lay preacher?

I doubt that he will be left behind. The danger is that the lay preacher may hire out to the others. The rhetoric of religion may become the crucial ingredient for cementing in place the post-industrial "socialism" of the rich which rationalizes and plans the society according to the standards of the experts and the elites rather than of the people. It would be the ultimate confounding of the legacy of Winthrop with the legacy of the Robber Barons. The City on a Hill would be—perhaps—orderly, well-financed and well-patrolled; but it will not be unduly bothered with justice, mercy, and humility; with brotherly affection and the sacrifice of superfluities for the wants of others; with a sharing of conditions of joy, labor, and sorrow. The covenant with an exacting God would be transmuted into a contract with a contented City Manager.

There are no gains without risks, and Carter is the risk I am willing to take at the moment. Being aware of risks, however, often helps us to minimize them. Or, to push my quadruple image over the brink—four-warned is forearmed.

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